Magister-Auctor Saga

Arrogance & Ignorance

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To make things easier for the reader, we used the post-Rebuilding names in this section. As a reminder:

Zone	Alternative name	Pre-Rebuilding name
Zone 1	Alkebu-lan (Alkebulan)	Africa
Zone 2	- - - - -	Eurasia
Zone 2 Oost	Waçúm	Asia
Zone 2 West	Erebúm	Europe
Zone 3	Abya Yala	America
Zone 3 Noord	Vineland	North America
Zone 3 Zuid	Anahuac	South America
Zone 4	Okeanos	Australia / Oceania
Zone 5	- - - - -	Antarctica

Maria Liber

This section discusses the Charter Groups. These are the learning communities that sign the Charter of the Learner. The contents of the Charter can be found in the previous book, The Learner Era.

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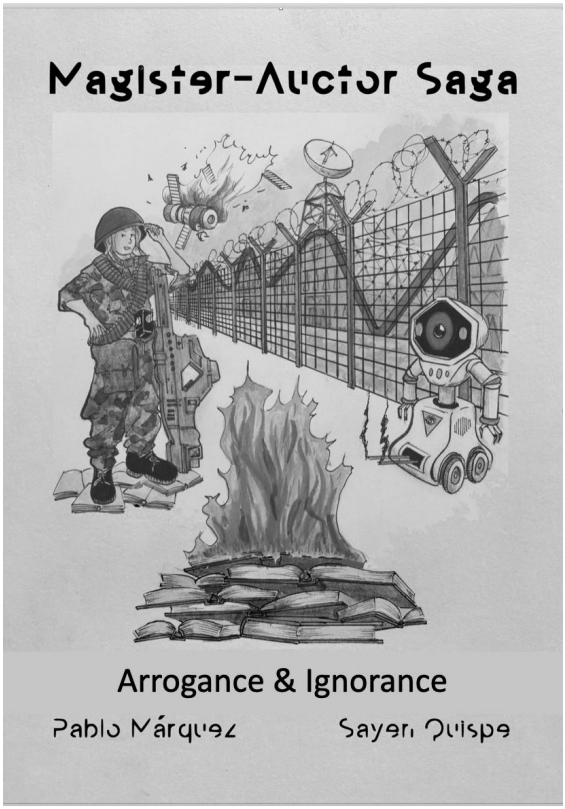

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To Manuel, Sebastião
and Olívia

The birth of Bloomkamp (2046-2059)

Greta is on the high-speed train from Paris to Madrid. Sérgio is now almost a year old and is sleeping next to her. It's quite a feat to travel by train from London to Lisbon, even without a baby. Fortunately, the train staff is very helpful. She left London yesterday afternoon. Now she has a comfortable couchette for her and her son on the night train to Madrid. There she will transfer to the train to Badajoz. In the border town, the connection to Lisbon, via Évora, awaits her. She thinks of her grandfather, Paulo. Just over twenty years ago, he had so desperately hoped that the direct Lisbon-Madrid-Paris connection would actually be ready in 2034 as the then government had announced ten years earlier. He had always dreamed of taking the night train to Paris and from there the *Eurostar* to London. He was never able to do it.

Greta laughs to herself. He would have been annoyed by the multiple transfers. Moreover, the train still takes just over six hours to cover the 500 km between Madrid and Lisbon. That's already half the time it took in the 2020s, but the delays continue to drag on as the high-speed railway is being built. Less polluting traffic has been discussed for fifty years. But in Europe's *Far West* (Erebúm) apparently, that's difficult or impossible. Most residents still consider individualism and rapid travel the most important aspects of human endeavor and continue to swear by cars and airplanes. Policymakers enjoy flying and are very cautious about investments that would create competition for aviation. This could lead to the loss of privileges for personal and professional travel. Travel time by rail between the two Iberian capitals must therefore remain significantly higher than the travel and waiting time at regional and international airports. However, for VIPs, these waiting times are practically nonexistent.

Summits on climate and mobility whereto prime ministers fly back

and forth in private jets mainly serve to appease activists with grand futuristic plans. Moreover, more environmentally conscious travellers are among the *live slow mentality* and if such a conscious mortal doesn't have the time, they better not travel, the country's Minister of Mobility recently pointedly remarked during a debate with Greta's now 43-year-old namesake. The renowned climate activist had chosen Lisbon as a stop on her European cycling tour. She wanted to draw attention to travel options by train, metro, and fast city tram, supplemented by bicycles for shorter trips.

Greta's thoughts return to her grandfather. He once told her how his father had said that growing old isn't bad, but seeing one's own generation gradually disappear is difficult to cope with. At that time, his *tertúlia* group thinned out again after one of its members died. Today, his generation is almost entirely gone. In early June of last year, Aunt Joana and her mother were in Oostende, along with Sebastiaan, Alan, and family, to attend Great-Aunt Anne's funeral. Like her brother, she had requested her ashes to be scattered at sea.

Greta remembers how Great-Aunt Anne and her grandfather, each in their own way, had engaged in communication and dialogical learning. She recalls another trip she made over four years ago. Her cousin Alexandre had found several letters from Cathy Braydune in Grandpa's correspondence. She and her two cousins were very curious about who Cathy could be. Their mothers knew nothing about this, so Greta consulted Anne. Her thoughts drift further back to those years before little Sérgio was born…

…she has only just arrived in Oostende when Anne hears that Marta Lacour has died.

"Marta was one of your grandfather's good friends," Anne begins. "I've been in touch with her regularly, and your grandmother, Maria, whom you never knew, also corresponded with her for a while when she worked at a teacher training college."

"Tell me, Aunt," asks Greta.

"Marta was a fellow student of Paulo. They were both very

fascinated by the *Institutional Pedagogy* and both did internships with Fernand Oury."

"Yes, I found letters with him, and I also have a whole folder of digitised letters between your father and Fernand Oury. Grandpa organized them into a more or less readable document."

Anne smiles: "My brother and my father had great admiration for that French teacher. I sometimes found him a bit pedantic, but I think that of almost all men!"

She laughs.

"My experience with men hasn't been very happy. Perhaps that's why I sometimes exaggerate a bit. Perhaps it wasn't the man himself, but some of his 'followers'. You know, the kind who put a halo on their leader's head. If I'm completely honest, I have to say that he never sought recognition himself. And he always insisted on cooperation, even when writing about real-life experiences. He never wanted to be listed as the first author."

"And what does that have to do with Marta?" asks Greta.

Anne laughs again: "Yes, please help me not to digress too much. I do that more often these days. Marta, that is. After Paulo and Marta graduated as teachers, your grandfather went on tour. You may have found traces of it in his library. He became involved in a school experiment in Brabant, originally led by a group of young parents, including several political migrants—you would have called them political refugees back then. Shortly after, he left for the Netherlands, where he worked briefly with a local Freinet movement. Then he headed for Spain, with a brief interruption in France. After two or three years, he briefly returned to Belgium, after which he permanently left for Portugal with your grandmother. But Marta stayed in Belgium. I believe she met Claude Azuará with brother. You know, I talked about him when you interviewed me for your thesis. She worked with Claude and his wife for a while. Almost unknowingly, they jointly ensured the expansion of *Institutional Pedagogy* towards *Institutional*

Anthropogogy. For years, Marta provided teacher training, assisted by teachers who were members of the Freinet- or Modern School Movements. In these programs, child and adult learners worked together on projects. Claude did the same in France, and Maria, your grandmother, tried it in Portugal, along with some friends, closely associated with the local Modern School Movement.

"It's strange that I find so little of that," Greta notes.

Perhaps you'll find more traces of it in some local working groups. Ask your Aunt Joana. She's still connected to that university institute that studies psychology, communication, and dialogical learning, right? But this specific model of teacher training has always remained on the margins of higher education programs. Although practice supervisors had considerable freedom of action at the time, that didn't already then stop policymakers, both in academia and at government level, considering suspicious far-reaching institutional models and the excessive involvement of learners in their own learning process.

"Nowadays, it would be astutely said that this kind of learning community is good for grassroots workers living on the margins of society," sighs Greta.

"Oh, honey, it wasn't much different back then. Anyone who talked about teaching people to think critically outside the usual democratic rhetoric was immediately frowned upon."

"Mom and Aunt Joana have succeeded in getting researchers interested in *Ignarysis*. More and more articles are appearing there by critical authors from the most diverse disciplines of the humanities, except perhaps… Mom recently remarked that there are few contributions from political science."

"I have the impression that ignarometric analysis is gaining traction among critical thinkers. Political science will likely follow suit, if only to develop counterarguments."

Greta looks at Anne, shaking her head, and then says, "And maybe there are young students in this field of humanities who are really

becoming interested. Mom and Aunt Joana aren't ruling out updating the framework in the coming years. They're currently compiling information."

… Great-Aunt Anne didn't live to see the update of the ignarometric framework either, Greta thinks, as the slowing train brings her reflections from back then back to the present. She seems to have realised she was perhaps a bit too optimistic. New ideal types are emerging in the "more arrogance" and "more ignorance" sections, and also in the combined "more" zones. More than one of these ideal types represents the political sphere. She herself contributed to it. She is very familiar with the examples provided by the students for the Charter Groups she supervises with her aunt at the same university to which Great-Aunt Anne referred back then.

Little Sérgio wakes up. Greta takes the bottle warmer from her travel bag and warms milk for his afternoon meal. She talks softly to him as she feeds him. She spreads a blanket over the rather wide bed next to the sofa and lets him crawl around a bit. When he tries to straighten himself up by the wall-mounted reading lamp, she gives him her hand. He grabs the other hand and, once pulled up, tries to take a step toward her. He falls on his bottom. He crows. She smiles at him and takes some picture-and-feel books from her bag. She directs his hand to one of the books that depicts an orchestra. When the sound of the corresponding instrument is heard as he touches it, the baby laughs. Greta places the other books within reach of him and begins to play with him.

Since Joana and Catherine proposed the ignarometric framework a quarter-century ago, the political landscape has changed somewhat. After Putin's death, the former Russian Empire quickly became a kind of re-edition of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. *The Holy Orthodox Empire of the Russian Nation* is a modern version of that former German Nation, located somewhat

further west. The multitude of principalities in the vast territory took the form of small oligarchic republics. And all these oligarchs are constantly at war with each other.

In Greater Europe, west of Russia, nations still exist, but the borders of the states are increasingly blurring under the pressure of large economic groups using Europe as a base. Pan-European regulations are increasingly being imposed, benefiting the capitalist economy. With the disappearance of the state, all public social services are gradually disappearing. The health sector has been completely privatised throughout Greater Europe (Erebúm), following in the footsteps of all other basic services, such as water, electricity, and communication infrastructure. As the actual production units are relocated to Waçúm, Alkebulan, Abya Yala, and Anahuac, unemployment in Greater Europe, the Russian Nation, and the United States (Vineland) is rising ever faster. Low-skilled immigrants are leaving all these regions and returning to their own countries, often following in the footsteps of the companies they previously worked for, which are now relocating their units to where the raw materials are found. Local, low-skilled workers are following their colleagues and, in turn, becoming migrants. Others take low-paying jobs at still-existing local private companies funded by taxes: garbage collection, infrastructure maintenance. Manual workers still do find work. The parallel economy is resurfacing everywhere. The unemployed are becoming handymen.

The vast majority of the global economy is in the hands of the rulers of the Chinese Empire. They also maintain their claim to parts of Alkebulan. The vast territory and the enormous population under a single ruling oligarchy mean that Chinese production units are located within their own borders. Moreover, the central rulers, together with the administrators of the Indian Empire, have options over adjacent territories thanks to a kind of non-aggression pact. In this way, the two most populous geographical units in the world under a single administration, control not only the intervening

territory but also all regions east of China and west of India.
The island states east of China are becoming increasingly dependent on this economic giant and neighbour. Taiwan, Korea, and the Philippines (*parts of Waçúm*) sometimes maintain trade relations with the Chinese Empire out of necessity. Japan is primarily populated by elderly people. Companies and brands established here have also relocated their production units. Young people who do not wish to emigrate are retreating to residential and village communities. This way, care for the elderly remains in the hands of the family and those small communities.
The vast areas south of the Holy Orthodox Empire of the Russian Nation, between India (Waçúm) and Europe (Erebúm), are no-man's land, or rather *everyone's land.* In the entire region, which egocentric Europeans once called the Middle East, only a few independent states remain. Turkey and Pakistan, for example. Places still rich in natural resources remain under the strict control of the economic power blocs of China and India.
The religious war of attrition during the 2020s in the Near East, as European leaders called it, caused the entire region to crumble. The result is that today, warlords gather around them almost everywhere. They typically use the defense of a local interpretation of the dogma of one of the three Abrahamic religions as a pretext to assemble their own armies, militias, or terrorist groups. These warlords were originally financed through obscure schemes devised by the power blocs of the twentieth century. This financing was primarily intended to enrich through the arms industry. Later, the warring groups were increasingly left to fend for themselves. The Russian rulers, but soon after also the American and Greater European leaders, gradually lost interest in these regions and their self-proclaimed rulers when it became clear that other places on earth would have to be explored in search of raw materials over the next fifty years. The flow of money to the controlled industries and the actual owners of the world had to be adjusted. Moderate

Abrahamic leaders continue to proclaim that their own religion is one of peace, not war. However, they appear to have abandoned all their collectively declared sacred sites. A new white—or must we say blood-red—spot has appeared on the world map. After the war of attrition between fanatics, the region is now left to those same surviving fanatics. Peace-loving families of all religious and non-religious persuasions have emigrated en masse over the past twenty years. New arrivals are mercenaries seeking to fight in the service of one of the countless warlords. The partly public, partly secret diplomacy of the leaders of Erebúm and the Chinese Empire (most of Waçúm) works hard to concentrate as much armed conflict as possible in that region. Controlled immigration is permitted out of self-interest, while strict laws banish troublemakers or discreetly remove them from prisons to conflict zones. There they work as radicalised mercenaries.

The central government of the United States has gradually withdrawn from the Stratego game. The citizens of the United States are now virtually locked within borders that their leaders themselves have practically sealed off from anyone born outside their borders after 2025. Even before that, cheap labour from the South was steadily declining. But over the past twenty years, that number has almost reached zero. Few migrants are willing to risk being shot at the border. Erebúm brands have production facilities in Abya Yala, and products from China are finished there. Panama (Abya Yala) is the hub for goods exports to both the East and West. Migrants from the South remain in that zone. Migrants from Mexico, further north, also prefer to settle in Spanish-speaking areas. Industry in the United States (Vineland) is increasingly declining. Due to the further degradation of the school system and the still very active religious movements and sects, fundamentalism against anything related to science has increased significantly. People are moving back to rural, gated communities. There, freedom has often become synonymous with individualism. Within

these gated communities, conflicts are immediately fought out with firearms, just as in the nineteenth century.
Autocratic leaders are emerging in rural areas almost everywhere in the world. Increasingly, they are the ideal types listed in the ignarometric framework as *particratie leader, sect leader*, *fascist leader* or *overbearing leader*. They carry out cleanings in the areas they control, by turning a blind eye to armed civilians acting on their own behalf and by means of convenient internal or external banishments.
In all still centrally governed areas, including the United States, Erebúm, China, and regionally governed areas in the Holy Orthodox Empire of the Russian Nation, arrogant leaders are working their way up to become rulers, with an increasing number of ruthless ignorants blindly following their leaders.

On the other hand, the will to know, to explore, to learn, and to cooperate remains a hallmark of humanity. Owners blinded by wealth, children of the globally dispersed economic system with its capitalist aspects, are incapable of destroying that will. Learners organize themselves and find each other.
In the countries below the Anahuac Amazon belt, learning communities are growing rapidly. After a long hiatus, the southern states of Brazil (Anahuac) are once again becoming the meeting place for grassroots groups striving for a pluralistic world. Many meetings offer augmented reality capabilities. Specific spaces are being built for this purpose. This allows those unable to travel to participate in most discussion platforms. In recent years, a new network seems to be forming. This often utilises existing, abandoned technology in many places. The autocratic leaders are unaware of it, and the ignorant followers cannot use it. Grassroots groups from Anahuac, South Alkebulan, Erebúm, Vineland, Okeanos, North and East Waçúm, and so on, are successfully exchanging experiences among themselves. New communication channels are being established with the help of scientists who meet

in person in existing international — or should we say *worldly*? — structures such as the laboratories in Zone 5, the space stations, the lunar base. Even the Martian settlement sometimes gives a signal. But for practical reasons, the Space Station on Mars, let alone on Ganymede, cannot currently be of much help to the digital meeting network. Signals simply take too long to travel back and forth.

Many intellectuals and scientists are successfully securing funding for their relocations. For several years now, Canadian (North Vineland) universities have been skilfully attracting a new generation of researchers and scientists from across the Vineland continent. Scientists from the United States prefer to settle among their northern neighbours, where they experience more openness. However, there are still important ties with universities in California, New Jersey, and Massachusetts (South Vineland). There is still plenty of activity there that could lead to original start-ups with a humanistic rather than purely economic character. Among themselves, researchers and scientists refer to the intellectual *Valobomo:* the quadrilateral Vancouver - Los Angeles - Boston - Montreal. A continuous flow of correspondence exists between these four poles.

In Erebúm, you could speak of an intellectual triangle of London - Paris - Berlin. This triangle is supplemented by an arc from Granada to Milan passing Madrid, Toulouse, Lyon, and Zurich. In the Brussels region, both the laic and Catholic universities are still well-known for sociology and theology, respectively. The major universities in Erebúm are trying to encompass other universities of applied sciences in a sense. For example, the university center in Lisbon, where Greta and her aunt Joana work, depends on the *Institute of Education* from the University of London. Other colleges were practically taken over by institutions in Paris and Toulouse.

In Erebúm, too, the correspondence between these various units is very busy. Gradually, it became common to meet via avatars, in private areas within platforms like Minecraft. These meetings take

place in a constructed garden scenario now known as *Public Virtual Literary Garden.* The reference to the *Literary Republic* is clear. Participants usually talk about the *Hortublic*. Furthermore, there are also more private meetings at certain universities, which involve physical travel. This is the result of a form of paranoia that has developed among independent and critical researchers. Articles such as in *Ignarysis* are often the reason for this. Many of these articles, in the spirit of Bourbaki, are submitted under collective pseudonyms. The most critical Vineland colleagues are gradually adopting that travel culture. Initially, they traveled by plane, but nowadays more often by rail. Amtrak has been building high-speed lines for ten years, straightening existing highway or railway lines through rural areas. The fundamentalist, anti-science population prefers to settle inland. But more extreme groups attack passing "strangers". And all things considered, it's easier to protect an express train than a bus. So travellers are switching from highway to express train as a result of the growing unsafe conditions along American highways. More aware and less ignorant citizens are also doing so out of concern for climate change resulting from the unrestrained waste and pollution of the twentieth century population from wealthier regions of the world. Just like in Erebúm, the Vineland trains are comfortably equipped. They resemble mobile offices, with well-catered meals. In addition, one can enjoy a good night's sleep on journeys that last more than a day.

Worldwide, train and air travel are rapidly becoming more expensive. But traveling long distances in a private car is no longer an option. Outside of Erebúm and China, such a journey is extremely dangerous, not only in the Vinland interior. Almost all passenger transport is now electric. This means travellers have to factor in waiting times for recharging batteries, often at unattractive rest areas. Service stations for fossil fuels are rare. No, the still-active lobby for private transport is now promoting private car

ownership for short trips and vacations in one's own region. They are cleverly capitalising on the increasingly frequent messages on social media about the great dangers of visiting places where a different language or culture is spoken, even within Greater Erebúm!

Lobbies are still important for mass consumption, but large lobbying structures have become relatively unimportant. Take the G7 group, for example. Ultimately, that group is a remnant of the economic *boom* after the Second World War of the last century. The group now meets biennially but has little significance. The International Monetary Fund, or IMF, still holds power. Formally, this fund is still a branch of the United Nations. After the end of what was called the Cold War, local wars and massacres in many parts of the world increasingly demonstrated the impotence of such international bodies. Bloomberg-scale figures took control of the monetary fund for their own gain. No one talks about stabilising national economies anymore. The IMF didn't do that in practice before, but now self-enrichment is no longer a hidden objective. The main concern of the IMF Steering Committee today is to preserve a number of places in the world where workers can produce relatively peacefully and other places where the service sector maintains consumption patterns. Therefore, the IMF also discreetly collaborates in the preservation of conflict zones. All surplus weapons are transported there. This way, profits in this lucrative sector are not too severely affected. An added benefit is that the ballistic arrogance shifts to areas where military and paramilitary leaders can continue their Stratego game. A further advantage is that arrogant, less ignorant military personnel can be deployed, if necessary, to protect those areas where production must be guaranteed.

The conductor knocks at the door. He asks if Greta wants to eat her dinner in her compartiment or if she'd rather go to the dining car. She chooses to stay in the couchette with her son. Shortly after,

her dinner is brought. Sérgio falls asleep again, and an hour later, she's getting ready for bed as well.

The next morning Greta has plenty of time to have breakfast, feed, and dress little Sérgio before the train arrives at Madrid station around nine. The connection to Badajoz is in forty-five minutes. Greta gets help from a young couple she struck up a conversation with in the waiting room. They introduce themselves as Bianca and Gabriel. Greta quickly learns that Bianca is from Barcelona and Gabriel was born near Porto. They also go to Lisbon, where Bianca wants to consult the university archives. She is a historian and is currently conducting anthropological research on Iberian folk customs and their spread in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the Iberian Peninsula was under the same Habsburg monarchy.

Together, the young travellers settle into a train compartment, having been assured by the conductor that the train is only half full, allowing them to easily change seats. With the help of the same conductor, they electronically confirm adjacent seats on the Badajoz-Lisbon train. The high-speed journey to Badajoz will take two hours. The train to Lisbon is waiting for its connection from Madrid and is scheduled to depart shortly after noon.

Little Sérgio is quite pleased to now have three adults at his disposal. They take turns entertaining him until he falls asleep. Their conversation soon turns to education policy in Greater Erebúm. Bianca is convinced they belong to the last generation of a middle class for whom moving on and pursuing higher education was and is a fairly obvious step after completing compulsory secondary education. Now local governments under the Central Government of Greater Erebúm are increasingly replacing national governments, a trend is quickly becoming apparent. In most places, there is already talk of suspending compulsory schooling for those above the age of 14 for the next five to ten years. For the three, the first consequence is quite obvious: ignorance will rapidly increase.

Influencers will gain even more control over their followers.
“It feels like we've gone back to square one,” Gabriel notes. “Magic has been replaced by some messaging *app*. Compared to that, the popular apps of our childhood were innocent toys.”
“Innocent toys?” Greta asks, somewhat surprised. “I can remember at least two that were used extensively for narking and bullying among young people. And on popular apps, adults spread plenty of fake news to persuade people to vote for autocratic figures with dictatorial tendencies.”
“What I’m saying,” Gabriel resumes, “is that those apps were ultimately somewhat monitored by human-run agencies. There were even less or more democratic regimes that could somewhat restrict the owners or developers of such apps if they were too lax in their handling of disinformation. But as that kind of disinformation became useful for discrediting anyone who criticised the profit-driven model of an ever-expanding consumer market, control over the apps diminished. Today it’s nonexistent. If, in addition, the institution in which people can learn to think critically is increasingly removed, influencers become a kind of omniscient and adored problem-solvers. In that respect, they show little difference from the magicians of the time of divine representatives on earth.”
Bianca laughs. “Gabriel introduces bloggers, *vloggers* and influencers equal to the high priests of the Egyptian pharaohs.”
Gabriel laughs too. “Yes, it does sound nice, but meanwhile, I hear the most incredible stories from the children I work with, and especially from their parents. Mysticism and gullibility completely trump logic and science. And the worst part is that many of my colleagues end up supporting those stories.”
Now it’s Greta's turn to laugh. “So,” she says, “when you put it that way, it’s actually a good thing to reduce the number of years of compulsory education. Children will be less exposed to the ignorance of their own teachers.”

Gabriel suddenly becomes serious. “I don’t know how aware you are of current school routines. Again, we have teacher training solely to prepare teachers and educators to serve as instruments for maintaining routines that lead to slavish learning. School is certainly not the institution where children learn to think critically. But removing the institution doesn’t solve the problem of course. That has unfortunately often been the reaction of those who critically examine the school system: they push for the abolition of the oppressive school. It's a bit like ‘*rather not eat and die’* in stead of *‘for the time being, still eat unhealthy food, but continue to advocate for healthy food*’. And now the solution to that dangerous ‘*abolish everything*’-fanatics go hand in hand with the even more dangerous ‘*divide and conquer*’-defenders who are currently taking over regional governments. More ignorance is the result, with two elites seemingly at odds. But ultimately, we have a well-formed and informed moneyed elite and a small, well-formed intellectual elite who somewhat disdain money, yet simultaneously use it to insulate themselves just like the moneyed elite from the pool of ignorance. This intellectual elite does want to offer its children a critical education. In Great Erebúm, this currently happens almost exclusively in private schools with cooperative education models. And they have to pay for it. State schools with such a model are quickly considered suspect, causing many ignorant people, whose children would benefit most to avoid those schools instead of seeking them out. Thus, such schools serve a residual population of less affluent parents who still possess sufficient critical thinking skills to send their children there. One could argue that the fewer ignorant people who use them, the greater the chance that a virtually free critical education is still available for those who want it. Protecting those schools and their surroundings, in my opinion, is a kind of self-interested ghettoisation, unlike the ghettoisation imposed by others. But socially, the result is roughly the same: one gets an ever-widening divide between different groups in society.

This also increases the distrust and hatred of one group towards another.

Greta thinks for a moment before answering: “You know, my mother and my aunt developed what had been an idea in the family for several generations into a tool to guide analysis in the study of human interactions. In sociological circles, their model has become known as the *ignarometric analysis*. The tool is particularly useful in a phenomenological approach to reality. But anthropogogues also frequently use it. What we find is that…”

“Wait a minute,” Gabriel interrupts. “Did you just say you’re the daughter of one of the Demeester sisters? I’m an avid reader of *Ignarysis*, more specifically of the study cases related to education and training.”

Greta smiles. “Yes,” she says, “I’m Catherine’s daughter, and I work with Joana regularly.”

“I have carefully read the proposal of the *Charter of the Learner*,” says Gabriel.

Bianca joins the conversation. “You know, when Gabriel gave me an issue of *Ignarysis* for the first time, I thought the *ignarometric framework* especially useful for sociologists and anthropogogues. But as I delve into the history of folk culture as an anthropologist, I’m discovering that some of our research benefits from an ignarometric approach. But we interrupted you.”

“That's no harm,” Greta replies. “I just wanted to say that while browsing in my grandfather’s library, I noticed how this connection between ignorance and arrogance has long been a way of studying human behaviour in previous generations of our family. But… even without that family trait… if you look at the history of the generalisation of access to knowledge and science, what Gabriel just noted isn’t a new phenomenon. Both among the moneyed elite and the intellectual elite, as he said, throughout history one find individuals who prefer to isolate themselves from what is often condescendingly called the pleb or common folk. Some property

owners adopt a charitable attitude toward workers, while some intellectuals adopt a paternalistic, protective attitude toward those who haven't studied. And yet. Those who are aware of their privileges rarely enter into partnerships with those who don't possess those privileges. Therefore, the way in which our modern societies tend toward a kind of new caste system, where social mobility becomes more difficult, increasingly obscures the complementary nature of human diversity."

Bianca then says: "I read in that issue from late last year, in which the ignarometric framework is presented again, the description of the four quadrants with four utopian societal models. My first thought was that the totalitarian utopia unfortunately seems to be the least utopian model and that we are rapidly evolving in that direction."

"That's one of the reasons why Aunt Joana insisted on presenting that Charter Gabriel mentioned earlier. We hope this way, and I say "we" because I work with Joana, we can explain more clearly what we believe a learning group is. We want to draw attention to it, including those still involved in existing education. We think it's important to emphasise the role of the learning and cooperative group. How long do you plan to stay in Lisbon?

"We don't know exactly yet," says Bianca. "But we've reserved a student studio for one academic semester. We have to let you know by the end of November if we want to use it longer. Why?"

"I would like to suggest to Gabriel he enrols in the postgraduate program Joana and I supervise together."

Greta then explains how the course is structured. She also provides Gabriel with the necessary administrative information.

Shortly after four o'clock in the afternoon, the train arrives at Lisbon's Orient station. Alexandre and Francisco are waiting for their cousin and her son. They explain to Gabriel and Bianca how to reach their temporary accommodation on the university campus and agree to contact each other soon. The family travels by metro

and high-speed surface tram to the neighbourhood in western Lisbon where Alexandre and Manuela still live in the house with the Paulo Demeester library. Greta has a pleasant studio apartment on the same street with a long-term lease.

In the fall of 2046, Greta and Joana will organize the short-term postgraduate program for the third time, in the form of a learning community. Due to the birth of Sérgio and Greta's subsequent maternity leave, Joana decided not to include the course in the spring semester of the past academic year, 2045-2046. However, given the interest shown, the course was scheduled for both semesters this year. Thanks to this dual offer, Greta was able to propose to Gabriel that he participate in the first of this year's two learning communities. The students enrolled for this fall semester are quite an international group. Three of them are anthropogogues sent by Hypolite d'Ailleurs from London. They come from the former Palestinian-Israeli territory. After the end of a nearly ten-year war in what was once a densely populated area, only rubble and hatred remained. Not a single school remains standing in the entire region. Those who never left the area have entrenched themselves in small, highly closed communities. Physical movement is virtually impossible due to the lack of infrastructure. Even desert paths remain impassable due to the absurd number of mines, supplied for years by the Southern Vinland, Erebúm, and Chinese arms industries. The three members of the Hypolite learning community, which is still collectively reviewing local projects, are involved in an inter-community effort to re-establish structured schooling. Given the circumstances, the program would be exclusively digital, based on an interactive learning platform. Like other rebuilders in conflict or war zones, the three anthropogogues have doubts about the genuine will of local administrators to truly give this inter-community project a chance. Besides Gabriel, there is another student from Spain. Others come from Central Erebúm. One person comes from one of the many Russian republics. Just before

the start of the course, three young people from Northwestern Erebúm show up. During the brief introduction round at the first meeting, it became clear that almost all the practical reports demonstrate intrusive patronising by local authorities. Concern about the dismantling of general public schooling is high. Education is increasingly being replaced by private networks that operate remotely. The participants and their supervisors want to make their concerns about this the focus of the critical reflection in the present Charter Group.

Participants from outside Great Erebúm offer highly revealing testimonies. For years, people have been constantly hunted and abused, both by militias led by ignorant loudmouths and by deranged soldiers of what is supposed to be a regular army simply because it depends on a chain of command reporting to an elected leader. The surviving population, both in the cities and the countryside, reports indiscriminate massacres. In all these areas, every survivor has seen brothers, sisters, parents, children, or other family members trampled, murdered, raped or driven away like animals. Children were incited to hatred from a young age and used as ruthless child soldiers. The survivors are dangerous ignorants both to themselves and to others. For years, leaders blinded by dogma, power, and wealth have driven even their own people to madness. Every thought of peace was constantly nipped in the bud. The finger was constantly pointed at the apocalyptic behaviour of others. All nursing staff were systematically murdered. Kindergarten teachers, teachers, and lecturers were also constantly targeted for abuse, shooting, and hanging. Destroying schooling and military infrastructure is an equal priority. Under attack, the barracks are more likely to be protected than the schools. Even within the army intellectuals involved in schooling and training face challenges. They are often prosecuted, usually on charges of espionage or treason.

Greta is quite impressed by these stories. She talks to Hypolite

about what she heard in a video call.
“I remember finding you pessimistic when I interviewed you for my thesis. But today I heard some real horror stories, including from the anthropogogues you send to us.”
She gives a brief account of the session, to which Hypolite says: “I think you too often look at reality through Erebúm glasses. As a result, you create an optimistic picture for yourself of what we achieve with communication, education, and the dissemination of science. You were born in that part of the world whose ruling powers have, for the last ten centuries or so, systematically done their best to control, enslave, and exploit the other part of the world. Anyone born there has little insight into the extent of the installed ignorance. You can’t even blame the Erebúm critics when they denounce a schooling system as they know it. I would say that in Greater Erebúm, in China, in parts of Anahuac, in Canada (North Vineland), and in parts of the United States (South Vineland), too, one can still afford the luxury of discussing the content and design of the schooling system. One can even point out the dangers of ignorance without being shot in the street. But what you heard from our friends from The eastern coast of the Mediterranean, and also from your West Waçúm student, is what I’ve observed when analysing many projects in parts of the Alkebulan or Waçúm continent. Often, the scenes of murder and destruction are even more horrific.”
“Are you telling me that if you look at the population worldwide, you meet ignorants faster than non-ignorants?”
“I certainly do. I think ignorance is galloping higher these days. In itself, being ignorant about something isn’t immediately a problem. I know I’m ignorant in many areas, and as long as I’m willing to cooperate, talk, and act with others who know they're ignorant in areas other than mine, we can realise projects that are worthwhile for everyone. With ignarometry, we can easily demonstrate that this kind of ignorance, with low or nonexistent arrogance, poses no

threat. The threat lies in the ignorance that entails apathetically following arrogant leaders. Even apathetic ignorants can cause great harm if we instil in them feelings of hatred."
"But does that mean that we are actually being somewhat naive and foolish by continuing to emphasise Charter Groups, by promoting a Charter of the Learner, by thinking that we will succeed in reducing global ignorance and thereby also arrogance?"
"I wouldn't say this is naive or silly. I would say that of the four utopias that your mother and your aunt proposed in *Ignarysis* the cooperative pluralist is currently only a pipe dream for a few. The nationalist utopia has, in a sense, been drilled into the population. In my opinion, however, we are currently moving towards a totalitarian utopia. Aggressive leaders exploit aggressive ignorants. In doing so, they rely on the apartment-cat utopia. This is presented to the less aggressive ignorants."
"But we can't just sit back and do nothing," sighs Greta.
"Certainly not," Hypolite replies. "Your aunt asked me a long time ago if it's not a form of surrender to doubt about the will of policymakers to generalise proposals that promote effective awareness and self-determination. I think it's healthy to doubt the goodwill of the governing and owning elite, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't start Charter Groups anymore. I'd say we should remain more aware of our limited scope, precisely for the sake of our mental health!"

During the autumn semester, participants from Greater Erebúm will share their experiences as working with charter groups in schools. Almost everywhere you sense a subtle resistance within the schooling structure. Sometimes it's not even clear whether it's happening unconsciously. In states whose governments claim to be parliamentary democracies, OECD projects are apparently part of the educational structures. The more nationalistic or totalitarian regimes consider the OECD a club of dangerous intellectuals. The Department of Education is even accused of extremism for clinging

to proposals from a quarter-century ago regarding *Learner Agency* and co-authorship between teachers and students when developing the curriculum. On the other hand, it's striking how some policymakers in parliamentary democracies idolise names more than a century old, such as Dewey and Decroly, as well as Freinet, Freire, and some of their contemporary critical followers. Education officials brandish terms like constructivism, socio-cultural approach, and pluralism, the conceptual basis of which they barely understand. Ignorant, arrogant figures are also increasingly gaining a foothold in schooling policy. In practice, they are gradually reducing existing schools and school groups to Lasallian precepts. Meanwhile, contemporary production processes have led to brands and investors forming an increasingly elusive cloud for national or regional taxes. State revenues have been declining for years, and the constant fear-mongering is diverting those revenues primarily to the arms industry and security. Only strictly primary schooling is still organised in buildings with classrooms and teachers. But the number of children per class is increasing. Other levels of schooling rely on money pumped into private network offers for distance learning. Moreover, it seems as if even the group of policymakers who continue to claim to advocate for schooling for everyone are impoverishing and diminishing that very universal schooling. Not only are the children, with fictitious science, kept on the left side of the Gaussian curve, now permanently invisible to current education systems. The right side is also invisible these days. Children test psychologists claim to have high potential are also disappearing from the system. They only receive a special education if they belong to the elite or if the elite will benefit from it.

The power lobbies further rely on manipulation-driven media and popular social networks among the middle class to implement their reforms. Ignorant or ill-informed popular influencers foster new ignorance among the middle class. The enthusiastic articles about innovative educators for example are often slavishly copied and

misquoted. Parents convince themselves that they should not frustrate or hinder their children and misrepresent constructivism or a socio-cultural approach as *laisser faire*. Other influencers, with policymakers in tow, declare that swimming against the current isn't a bad idea if that current leads us to the waterfall. Educational innovation would be the mainstream, imagine… And that's simply because ill-informed people place more credence in what floating minds say about learning communities than to bother investigating or even simply observing how a well-structured, pluralistic Charter Group organises its work.

It's ironic, in a sense. There's criticism of the authoritarianism and mediocrity of schooling systems. But those who criticise are perfectly entitled to be ignorant about education, thus fuelling opposition to any innovation. And not just in education. The same happens with the economy, war situations, or climate change. Ultimately, these ignorant, often superficial influencers unwittingly form a dark force that rapidly shrinks the middle class in general, with the rich becoming very rich and the poor becoming increasingly impoverished.

In subsequent years, Joana and Greta continue to teach one course per academic year during the spring semester. Greta arranges her six-monthly stay in Lisbon from late February to late August. From September to mid-February, she stays in London and supervise students from the *Institute of Education*. She also follows internships with trainee teachers who prefer placements within the network of democratic school institutions. That network is shrinking, but as long as internships remain available, Greta wants to continue supporting the critical learning communities through her intervention. She found a solution for Sérgio since he turned two. From September to February, he can go to a preschool community in London, and from March to August, he joins a community initiative in Lisbon. He explains that he's sometimes with his English friends, sometimes with the other ones.

“Who are those other friends then?” Francisco asks him one day.
“Those are the friends who speak our English not the other English,” the little boy answers smartly.
Greta laughs. "You heard that from Uncle Alexandre. There’s no such thing as our English and the other English. In London, you speak English with your friends, that's right; here, you speak Portuguese with them.”

During her time in Lisbon, Greta often goes through her cousins’ discoveries and their notes about their grandfather. A new publication is on the way. It stems from the correspondence between Paulo Demeester and Cathy Braydune. Greta met her once in 2041 through her great-aunt Anne. Cathy was a childhood friend of Paulo’s. They attended the same primary school but weren’t in the same class. They lost touch afterward, only to reconnect during their adolescence.
Anne had tracked down Cathy about ten years before Greta’s visit. This, in turn, led to renewed correspondence between Paulo and Cathy in the 2030s. Francisco found these letters on one of Paulo’s hard drives while searching for the electronic correspondence with the composer Frank Nuyts, whose compositions often inspire him. From the nature of the letters, Greta and her cousins deduce that Paulo and Cathy had once flirted. But they mainly reminisced about the activities they undertook together with the Youth and Nature association. Like her parents and cousins, Greta Campos is very environmentally conscious. That’s why she’s very excited about the correspondence between grandfather Paulo and his childhood friend. She retrieves some of Cathy’s diaries, which she received as a gift when Great-Aunt Anne introduced her to Cathy as Paulo’s granddaughter. In these diaries, Cathy describes their adventures with the Youth Association in more detail. She recounts discussions with farmers who provided barns for the young people for their summer and autumn camps. They discuss the parasite-eating birds that roost among the livestock and the misconceptions that these

birds cause disease. There are heated discussions about the foraging geese that land on the fields during their migration. She also recounts the difficulties the young people encountered when discussing the protection of birds nesting in the grain fields and meadows. It wasn't easy to adapt the mechanical tillage of the fields under intensive farming conditions so as not to destroy all the nests. Many conversations revolved around superstition. The young people regularly found barn doors nailed with crows and rare ravens to drive away evil spirits. The diet of the most common birds of prey and owls was also a hot topic at the time. Too often, the disappearance of poultry was attributed to these birds, while they primarily preyed on small rodents. There's a win-win situation when an owl or a kestrel nests in a higher part of a barn or a mill. Free-range poultry and young rabbits are relatively easy to protect. Meanwhile, the birds keep the mouse population under control. There are also reports of observations of bird hunters capturing protected species. It was often difficult to find the right people to tax illegal activities. Many stories concern caring for seabirds with fuel-oil-stained wings and the difficulty of keeping them alive. By the time they were found still alive on the beach, they were often already poisoned by their attempts to clean themselves. And even if they could be washed by human intervention, they were forced to remain in captivity because their plumage was no longer waterproof. Apparently, Ward Ruyslinck's book *In de naam van de beesten (In the name of the beasts)* provides much food for thought. In her diary, Cathy criticises psychologists who implant electrodes in the brains of primates and other mammals and subject them to sometimes quite aggressive experiments without anaesthesia. She discusses ethics and morality in conducting certain scientific studies. Greed is also discussed, especially when it concerns research funded by pharmaceutical companies. Other notes address the systematic disruptive and potentially lethal effect on the life of plants and animals, including humans, when certain industries and

companies implant themselves in sensitive ecosystems. A much-discussed document is Bert Haanstra's 1972 documentary. The film *Bij de beesten af* (*Off to the animals)* proposes a study of animal behaviour using ethology and focuses primarily on mammals, including humans.

Greta and her cousins take Cathy and Paulo's correspondence as a starting point. They connect it to Paulo's acquisitions for his library between 2000 and 2030. Just as he himself did, they, in turn, connect books. Carl Sagan, António Damasio, Max Bennet, Edward Wilson and the development of intelligence, and its consequences in various ecosystems throughout the Earth's history, provide a guideline. Greta also draws on older books, such as *Plea for the monkey* by Johan Van Dongen, in which the author discusses the danger of emerging viral infections. Alexandre reads part of *Immoral Risks. Secret government experiments on human beings* by Jonathan Moreno. Illuminating for the three cousins is a schoolbook from 1923 titled *Concise textbook of zoology* by O. Schmeil. That book comes from Paulo's grandfather's library. In it, the author draws a clear distinction between animals and humans. Humans constitute a separate class that does not belong in a textbook of *zoology*. Humans don't seem to belong to the animal kingdom at all. In high school in 1923, sixty years after Darwin's publications on origins and evolution, animals are animals and humans are humans. Greta wonders how the educators of the *new school movement* tackled the matter. She still thinks about language use today. For humans, the words man and woman are used, but for all other animals, the words male and female (or female) are used. She talks about this with her cousins. Francisco laughs: "If people projected themselves less onto the animals, then perhaps we would have an *alpha man wolf* instead of an alpha male wolf. The top of the hierarchy suddenly feels more human. Is that less arrogant?"

"Talk about that arrogance," says his brother. "Less than a hundred years ago, two major power blocs faced each other in Europe, as

you'll remember from history lessons. People spoke of West and East and a Cold War. Between the two blocs, on either side of the border, lay a heavily guarded strip of no-man's-land. When the capitalist economic model took over globally, that Cold War disappeared in Europe. But nearly half a century of no-man's-land created a peculiar green belt from north to south. For the next forty years, this green belt was preserved and studied on both sides. Military watchtowers became nature observation posts. Isn't that exciting? A threat of war between two heavily armed blocs gave rise to a ribbon of regenerating nature stretching thousands of kilometers. The green belt even became home to reintroduced grazers and small predators that had long since disappeared in the wild in those regions."

"Yes, green belts," says Greta. In the northern part of the Alkebulan continent, another green belt was created to hold back the desert advancing south. If I'm not mistaken, that was also around the turn of the century, or a little later. In the Anahuac tropical region, there's also a lot of reforestation going on, just like in certain areas of Waçúm. But the imposed consumerism in the richer parts of the world continues to lead to overproduction. Some say these green belts emphasise the idea of the finiteness of the planet and the need to treat it more carefully, but for me, much of it is just a facade. The Bloomberg leadership continues to enrich itself these days, soothing it here and there with donations and spectacle. The poor are the destructive culprits. But when pressure is really put on the sore spots, the establishment stirs. Greta Thunberg is forty-five today and remains the target of ignorant followers of arrogant autocrats."

"Speaking of autocracy. Isn't the unstoppable shift from particracy to oligarchy in the policies of southern Erebúm a strategy to bring the territory of Iberia south of the Pyrenees under a single local government, directly dependent on the European Central Government?"

"I heard about it at university," says Greta. "Apparently, the

increasing concentration of the population in just a dozen or so large residential areas on the entire Iberian Peninsula makes that transition even more likely. But we've digressed again. We were talking about the letters from Grandfather Paulo and Cathy Braydune. I was thinking of a publication from the Paulo Demeester Library titled *Forms of intelligence in animals and humans… or maybe not*. What do you think?"

A free electronic book with that title will be available in the publications catalog in early 2050.

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"Mom, I'm going to play with Manuel. We're going to build a castle," five-year-old announces Sérgio.

Greta smiles. Little boys continue to build castles and still want to bring knights to and from them. She thinks of her own games years ago, with her cousins, when they were together at Grandpa Paulo's. They had a big castle toot back then and a sort of farm.

The two boys open the boxes of plastic building blocks and begin their construction. Alexandra is now seven and prefers to spend her time with her older cousin Paulo. They read children's books together. He helps her when she has trouble reading a word.

Greta is preparing the next cycle of *library meetings* with Alexandre This year, they plan to emphasise the New Ignorance. They want to foster small charter groups here and in other libraries and encourage people to maintain blogs and posts based on verified information. They know it's practically a losing battle.

It's difficult to reunite two communities that are growing apart. On the one hand, the intellectuals themselves are susceptible to influence, especially when they make concessions to secure funding for university research centers. It's a recurring trend. On the other hand, there's a growing mass of New Ignorants. Sociologists use this term to describe the population who, however strange it may sound, have fewer learning opportunities today than roughly fifty

years ago, when it was still assumed that the Era of the Learner had finally arrived. Much of this has to do with the way primary school has gradually been replaced by basic instruction. Children have fewer social stimuli now that they have less contact with each other. Parents must already be very well-informed about how a growing child's brain develops to resist the trend that children learn best individually with electronic games and puzzles.

Not everyone reads authors like Harari, Bennett, or Damasio. These researchers and the new generation of writers who popularise science are still popular among the shrinking group of reading parents and educators, but are increasingly being laughed off, out of convenience or for economic reasons. It's not just local influencers that contribute to this. Populist leaders rely on market research using Electronic Intelligence to identify the most common content on major social networks. This demonstrates that it's easier to gain power through hate speech and by ridiculing those who push for study and dialogue in childrearing. Unfortunately, the message to abolish schools is simpler than advocating for a child-friendly school system based on cooperation between adults and children, in which children have a genuine say.

No, going to school is a waste of time for most people, so the saying goes. Compulsory school which had already been reduced to fourteen years, is gradually becoming compulsory schooling. Children can learn basic skills online, is the new general hype. There are plenty of educational games these days. Reading and arithmetic are supposedly individualised, as they say. A parent who accompanies them only needs to explain the basic steps for turning computers and tablets on and off. They should create a profile where children have unlimited access to electronic intelligence-driven programs that guide them and provide immediate feedback on good and bad answers. Licenses for learning programs are less expensive than the necessary purchases for a school-going child, especially now free state schools are becoming increasingly scarce.

Moreover, parents no longer waste time taking children to and from school. Furthermore, entertainment and child walkers are cheaper than the expensive typical after-school activities and summer camps. In the big cities, there's truly no shortage of child walkers who, at very affordable rates, accompany 2 to 10 children to a park or take them for a walk around the block. Due to an ongoing epidemic, it is no longer permitted to walk dogs in groups and dog walkers quickly retrained as child walkers.

But not only those who opt for the offered self-study with the help of computer science quickly make the children in fans again, so that they allow themselves to be drawn into the ever-growing network of short, unchecked information produced by copywriters from the advertising world.

Since the 2030s, proponents of free learning communities have sparked an explosion of such learning groups. What began as a response from critical intellectuals with a humanistic analysis of the instructional school quickly degenerated into an amalgam of closed communities formed by adults, simply out of protest, reluctance, or own ignorance. Many of these communities are careless about knowledge and the transmission of knowledge and are closing themselves off from each other. Hate preachers, extremists, and populists see them as a means to spread their message of destruction of society. Religious fanatics also vigorously use them to reject and vilify all secular science. Then there are the innocent, even if humanitarian, naive individuals. They, too, establish learning communities and increasingly exclude their children from what they see as a corrupt, unscrupulous society.

"I'd like to discuss what Hypolite did in some of our *library meetings*," says Greta. "You know he died recently. He often helped our mothers. You could see him as a kind of anonymous cooperator in the construction of the ignarometric framework."

"That won't be difficult," Alexandre answers. "I think we can link the *Charter of the Learner* with how he organised the Reflection

Groups. We could also ask Mom how we can further promote this charter, not just to visitors of our Library House. It would be nice to set up some remotely *library meetings* and exchange experiences with other initiators. Both in *Ignarysis* as in *Learner's review* there are some disturbing testimonies about the growing intolerance towards those who subscribe to the Charter."

"Yes, Gabriel, remember, the young man who a few years ago took part in our course, he recently told me during our weekly meeting in *Hortublic* experiences. He now works in Barcelona. Catalonia (Southern Erebúm) has always been a haven for humanist intellectuals, although they were often persecuted. He notes that the populist reinterpretation of learning communities is also causing increasing tensions among them between those who use the Charter as a guideline and those who consider every non-tolerant group that comes together to be a learning community. He says it's becoming increasingly difficult to have constructive discussions with groups that don't know the Charter or don't endorse it. The most common, unjustified comment, is that fanatics use the Charter to sideline not signing learning groups."

"Well, you can only conclude that the disinformation is also at work here. It's pretty easy to spread messages about that Demeester clique…"

"Demeester clique????"

"Yes, I was also surprised the first time, but quite a lot is written about *ignarometric analysis*. It would unlawfully attack the foundations of the capitalist system."

"So here too, you hear the ignorance," sighs Greta. "I don't think the ignarometry analysis attacks economic systems. I think it highlights the limits of each system. Ignarometry shows how certain relationships between people in a community lead to the community losing control of its own system."

"Try explaining that to someone who blindly follows the loudmouths…"

“Speaking of loudmouths. Do you think it makes sense to come back on the contribution of electronic intelligence in analysing information to separate rumours from verified facts in our *library meetings*?”.

“Well. In the 2020s, that seemed a rather impossible task. Just as now, there were quite a few conspiracy theories, spread not only by dictators and totalitarian regimes, but also by those who saw all electronic intelligence as the great new threat. My father told me he had once a long conversation with your mother about intelligence. That was many years ago. But even then, they saw connections between biological and artificial or, as they prefer, electronic intelligence. Incidentally, I know that in his robotics projects, my father always tries to approach electronic learning from errors with the same logic as biological learning from errors. Many years later, he returned to this with Grandpa Paulo when they were discussing the evolution of intelligence, following Bennet’s book.”

“So you think the cooperation between biology and electronics can be interesting for analysing information. That this interplay helps to distinguish truth from fantasy?”

Greta laughs. “You’re a go-getter, Alexandre! Think of that Harari book that made quite a splash about twenty years ago. *Nexus*, it was called. I can’t say I’m more optimistic today than the writer was then.”

“Why do you say that?”

“I think of people, endowed with biological intelligence, who, from a hierarchical position, use electronic intelligence solely for the purpose of their own truth. When we ourselves were still in kindergarten, in some Erebúm countries *Smartschool* came practice, it involved artificial intelligence — I also prefer to call it electronic intelligence — built into a digital education platform, which teachers could use to more quickly identify and guide children with “potential learning gaps”. There was considerable criticism of the system. But that criticism didn’t go very far. It focused primarily on

the way information about a student was collected. The time the child spent on that particular learning platform was a significant factor. As is often the case when analysing the response to the schooling system, the criticism wasn't at all about the fact that a student's learning gap was seen as a personal problem and not a system error. Unfortunately, today we see almost everywhere how schools are being replaced by guided self-study. The self-study platforms largely use the same electronic intelligence as back then to alert parents about their child's learning gap. How ironic! Even today, a child's individual performance in self-study is still measured against average learning time based on a program for grouped children in grades that no longer exist."

"But isn't that just the easy solution of those who sponsor this kind of education? That's not the fault of the built-in analytical tools."

"Agreed. But there's still a long way to go to achieve an understanding electronic intelligence. I find the idea interesting. Electronic intelligence can process large amounts of data more quickly and easily and, together with biological intelligence, can arrive at conclusions about the truth of a given piece of information. That's already complex. But the problem is even more complex. A community that is aware of a 'truth' doesn't necessarily mean that the community as a whole becomes more empathetic. Mama recently mentioned the statement of a former elected president of South Vineland who, even though all the measurements showed that the information about sea level rise was correct, said '*So what*?' He was enthusiastically cheered by his followers. Moreover, we see again and again today how truth is quickly overshadowed by fantasy, if that fantasy sounds more pleasant to the ears of those who want to believe it.

In other words, I believe electronic intelligence holds and will continue to hold an important place in research and scientific institutions, and that scientists can expect a lot of help from it. I don't think that this alone will make it easier to engage in dialogue

with the growing masses of arrogant and otherwise ignorant people."

"Do you mean by that that electronic intelligence is faster at detecting false messages than biological intelligence?"

"Something like that. A bit of a side note. My mother recently told me that Grandpa Paulo sometimes used the evolution of mobile phone use as an example. He believed the commercial and social pressure to use such a device was so great given the potential for large-scale personalisation of advertising. He didn't make many phone calls himself and found that more than three-quarters of his incoming messages were attempts to recommend new products. However, if he needed to contact a company or service, he usually got a chatbot on the line, which, he said, rarely addressed his specific question. Even a human conversation partner generally had a standard procedure in place that usually didn't address his request. He was therefore very happy that his latest mobile phone with electronic intelligence largely filtered out and blocked advertising. He considered unsolicited advertising to be 'false reports'. But he had these ideas…"

"My mom never told me that," Greta notes. "But he told me he was happy that, thanks to an intelligent process, almost all unwanted messages were filtered out of his email. I know from our parents' friend Steven Bird that machine learning algorithms can analyse large amounts of data to create a probability profile of what might be true and what might be fantasy."

"Yes, and your father told me something interesting about this. The enormous amount of false news related to scientifically accepted truths, such as the Earth being round or the effectiveness of a vaccine, allows programmers to develop simple self-learning programs by creating profiles based on the analysis of false news."

"What are you trying to say?"

"Well, as far as I understand it, the amount of different false information combined is usually greater than the amount of true

information on a given topic. An electronic intelligence can quickly build a picture of the different types of false information about a known piece of information by examining all the connections that spread the same kind of information about that same piece of information. This, in turn, helps to examine the smaller amount of true information about that piece of information. From there, the program then paints a picture of what is most acceptable as true information."

"So you could say that in this case, a rather limited group is spreading correct information, while a more extensive group is spreading misinformation, albeit of different genres. This is interesting sociologically, because it would demonstrate once again that a democracy based on the majority principle for decision-making is a weak democracy."

"I would say it is a phase, an intermediate step in the evolution from a model of society with an absolute monarch or an authoritarian dictatorship to a society based on cosmopolitan, empathetic and understanding relationships."

"*From the dictatorship of the elected majority to the cooperative recognition of majorities and minorities*… isn't that a good description of the content of our *library meetings*?"

Over the years, the gatherings at the Library House have taken on the character of the salonnières of eighteenth-century Paris (hecto year one hundred and seventeen). However, they are clearly more open to all young people trying to escape the ignorance into which the political system seems to push them, aided by uncritical initiators of learning communities that ultimately only exacerbate this ignorance. Greta takes on the majority of the organisation. She can count on her cousins Alexandre and Francisco whenever they are free from the obligations inherent in their artistic lives.

It is no coincidence that in the years 2053 and 2054 the Library House pays a lot of attention to what is becoming known as *Social Endemic Diseases*. Because the time has finally come. Although

Doctor Izzeldin Abuelaish did not live to see his dream come true, the idea arose in the early 50s. The *Abuelaish-Institute for Social Endemic Diseases* did not start at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, where the Palestinian doctor proposed the project. The Brussels Solvay Laboratory for Social Sciences is making room for the institute in collaboration with the University Hospital. The reason is simple. Fundamentalism is once again rearing its head in the three Abrahamic religions, and there are those who want to persecute all non-believers. This makes the strictly Catholic university an impossible place to house an institute that has *socially endemic diseases* such as violence, hatred, fear, incitement, religious persecution and racism as study object.

A lot of researchers publishing in *Ignarysis* question whether the initiative does not arrive too late. Just over half the world's population adheres to no religious dogma. But the pervasive dogma of money and property hasn't fostered ethics and empathy either. On the contrary. Among the non-religious population, the spread of hate is also widespread, often by poorly informed influencers and politicians, or even by well-informed policymakers who choose to incite the population within the borders of their administrative area against all other cultures and all other dissenters, both within and outside those borders, in order to consolidate their power. Overall society is more disrupted today than when Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish advocated for the institute's establishment in the aftermath of the Israeli-Palestinian war in the mid-2020s.

Greta and her friends see the split of the Solvay Laboratory, once Brussels' cradle of sociological research, from the School of Political Science and the Business School as a ray of hope. They believe this is a good way to return to its origins. Therefore, it's a good home for the *Abuelaish Institute*. The University Hospital seems a logical partner. Since its inception, it has sought to profile itself within a broad humanist framework, despite campaigns of hate, fear, and condemnation. The hospital staff has regularly been criticised for its

impartiality and openness during polemical discussions about euthanasia, abortion, palliative care, and more recently, vaccination and the management of increasingly frequent pandemics.

The Institute studies the broad spectrum of intolerance from both cultural-social and biological-social perspectives. There are quite a few interested parties in the educational sciences, where they still exist.

Many intellectuals and some politicians share the values of pluralism and cosmopolitan ethics and applaud initiatives like this Abuelaish Institute. But generally, the major power groups exploit fear and hatred to allow authoritarianism and totalitarianism to flourish. In doing so, they skilfully enlist the politicians who benefit them. This has long been the case in the now languishing United States. The Indian Federation and the Chinese Empire are governed by a small group of hand-picked politicians, an elite that respects the necessary non-aggression pacts among themselves. The politicians who are allowed to embrace authoritarianism and populism are sufficiently superior to the rest of the population to have long since determined that they have a greater interest in collectively ensuring they remain in that advantageous position. Palace revolutions cause more harm than occasional inaction. And the true elite tells their puppets that, whether they govern or not, they are in practice defending the same interests: limiting wealth, power, and possessions to the smallest possible group.

There is one clear trend. The greater the concentration of property and wealth in a given power bloc, the less democratic it becomes. This is also the case in Greater Erebúm. Formally, the continent still consists of independent states, but independent of what? Under the pressure of a Central Government, a Central Oligarchy if you will, all plans for an overarching Federal Council have long since been buried.

In all Erebúm States under the Central Government, politicians present voting as an option, not a right, much less a duty. In the

nineteenth century, illiteracy and tributes limited access to political participation. Today, everyone is allowed to vote, even those without money or complete ignorance. Powerful politicians do not prohibit individual choices but never encourage reflection. The growing ignorance is mainly due to the disappearance of schooling incentives. That is why many people do not vote. The apartment-cat utopia works in most closed communities. The division between *Them* and *We* has less to do with migrants and more to do with critical dissenters. Critics are presented as a different kind of dangerous people with no understanding of what daily life entails. Populists cleverly exploit this. Since the beginning of the century, election campaigns have no longer served to explain how one group of people intends to represent another. For the past twenty years, no programs have even been presented; today, there are hardly any campaigns. Furthermore, candidates aren't seeking a vote, but rather a proxy vote. Politicians know the results. Whoever can gather the most procuration letters almost certainly becomes the governing power. Political action takes place in small groups. And ultimately, it doesn't matter who sits in the House of Representatives or the Senate or who governs. Workers and non-owners seem to have completely forgotten the entire struggle for universal suffrage from a century and a half ago. The arrogant populists have cleverly ensured that individualism and miserable consumerism keep people from collective decision-making.

In large parts of what were called South America and Africa before the Volcanic Winter and Rebuilding, there are no power blocs. Consumerism is generally so miserable that it could almost be called nonexistent. The trend that began in the 2040s continues. In these areas, one can hardly speak of states anymore. Small communities organize around leaders who retain power because they have more or better weapons. This is because they are more astute in negotiating with large corporations that pay for the few remaining raw materials and what is grown with weapons and

status-conferring products. The production centers in some of these regions are another means of exerting pressure. Those who work there and are therefore integrated into the locally impoverished consumerist model are cleverly brainwashed. These workers are reminded that they have a right to money because they are still working. And right to money is the first step to well-being and enrichment; that remains the fable told by those who meanwhile keep the Golden Calf for themselves.

In the areas between the tropics, nature quickly regained its dominance, not only as a result of the green belts. These nearly inaccessible areas are mainly located in Anahuac, Alkebulan, and on the Waçúm Islands. Connecting roads are non-existent, or no longer exist. Except for a few larger cities, there is nowhere to land helicopters or small planes. Abandoned mines and overgrowth created new land barriers between the tropics. These regions are now quite sparsely populated. And those with wealth have no interest in exploiting these areas again; there is no profit to be made from them. The local small-time potentates know full well that there is nothing to be had that can be sold for a high price.

Nature has thus recovered in those regions and apparently protects small charter groups here and there, living in almost complete isolation. It is generally not the critical environmentalists who advocate for sustainable agriculture, but rather the rapid decline in the consumption of certain goods that is influencing world trade. The profits of distribution companies in the centrally governed parts of the Northern Hemisphere, in particular, now depend on the ever-growing population of the poor. For the food sector, this generally means local cultivation and horticulture. Coffee beans, cocoa, palm oil, and other products for which large areas of forest and jungle were once reclaimed as plantations are now rare and very expensive. Chocolate, real coffee, natural spices, and exotic fruits are generally unaffordable luxuries for the urban population. The poor buy only basic foods. These consist of industrially produced

bread or its substitute, dried or canned fish from hatcheries, and farmed poultry. Other meat comes from industrially farmed invertebrates processed into mince. Climate change makes it possible to grow tea where it is consumed. Another popular drink consists of a mixture of locally grown mutated coffee and chicory.
City dwellers who still have jobs and money spend a large portion of their income on the private companies that provide public transportation. Those who earn sufficient income can afford rented housing. In large urban areas, a significant portion of the population lives in rooms. Money is spent on communal amenities such as centralised laundries and baths. The global economy today relies less on the distribution of goods and increasingly on the sale of service packages. Even those with only a modest income buy at least basic health insurance. Almost everyone living in large urban areas spends relatively large fixed monthly or annual fees on access to entertainment networks.

As the sixth decade of the century approaches, a kind of globally consolidated democracy seems increasingly distant. The rising authoritarianism of intolerant groups and leaders is not the only cause. For over thirty years, successive viruses have ravaged wealthy consumer communities. Viruses against which effective vaccines were developed fifteen years ago are adapting with lightning speed. With each new virus alert comes an ever-increasing fear psychosis. Fear of illness and fear of violence are the two main reasons that keep the surviving, money-earning middle class indoors. And that is new. During the first pandemics of the century, the population was kept in mandatory quarantine, resulting in civil disobedience. Today, those who believe they are susceptible to infection choose to isolate themselves and voluntarily remain under house arrest.
With each new train journey from London to Lisbon, Greta notes the steadily declining number of passengers. In addition to standard entry visas, all passengers are now required to present their medical

records. This increasingly happens at the city border, not at a state border. Until last year, Greta could interrupt her six-month journey anywhere to visit colleagues and acquaintances. Starting this year, she can only interrupt her journey if she can present a health visa valid for the city she is visiting upon disembarking the train. She had been warned that this is the case in most major cities. Passengers traveling through the country who are not connecting at their arrival station are provided with specially equipped buses or additional metro cars. They are required to use these to avoid any potentially infectious contact with local residents.

That summer, Sérgio asks his mother not to stop in Paris but to apply for a permit to break their journey to Lisbon in Barcelona. Gabriel and Bianca still live there. For several years now, the avatars of Inês Legendre and himself have been meeting in the children's and youth zone of the *Hortublic*. He met Inês when he was ten and she was eight, during a visit to her parents in Paris. Inês' father was already working with the *Ignarysis* staff. Greta and Joana met him personally in the French capital at a meeting about setting up Charter Groups in the suburbs of major cities. Inês' mother also attended. The couple had developed a special program for both children under the care of Inês' aunt. They spent several wonderful days together. They visited one of the last remaining European zoos and the *Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie*. Because their parents are scientists affiliated with Erebúm universities, they were granted access to the complex.

The following year, Inês and her parents moved to Barcelona. Inês' father took over the publication of the adapted French-Spanish version of *Ignarysis* together with Gabriel. Both guide learning communities under the *Charter of the Learner*. They do this in Catalonia and the Eastern Pyrenees together with colleagues from Toulouse.

For Sérgio, the Parisian stopover without Inês became an unpleasant experience. He is happy his mother agrees to meet in

Barcelona, and Inês and he are very much looking forward to seeing each other again after four years of avatar conversations in the *Hortublic*.

Sérgio and Greta look around in surprise as they disembark the train at Sants Station. Only about twenty passengers walk to the checkpoints that allow access to the city. Most of the others proceed directly to the platform, separated from the main one for the train to Madrid and Lisbon. And that group isn't large either. It's early August, and they had expected more city visitors and passengers. According to Greta, the annual decline in passenger numbers seems to be accelerating. If this continues, Sérgio notes, there might soon be no trains anymore.

Sérgio repeats his observation the following year. As soon as they enter Sants, they see signs of the station's incipient decline. In the reception hall, which connects the international and transit platforms with checkpoints to enter the city, there's no one to be seen except a handful of travellers. Humanoid robots maintain the few fully automated ticket booths and the sparse restrooms.

"Apparently, they've adopted St. Pancras' policies," Sérgio continues. He's still quite impressed by their journey. It began in the nearly empty corridors of the London station, which just a few years ago was still bustling with life. They had walked amidst lowered shutters and dimmed advertising signs to a desolate platform. Before boarding the train, they had to pass through three control units, equipped only with electronic intelligence. The onboard service was also fully automated for the first time. At the transfer in Paris, they were led through a glass tunnel inside the metro corridors to a separate train car, where they then transferred to a train with only four carriages. Their carriage contained only passengers bound for the Catalan capital. The train stopped for the first time in Toulouse, where they discovered that the doors of their carriage wouldn't open. All the passengers from the adjacent carriage disembarked. Someone knocked on their window, and they

saw two Parisian friends, but they could only wave, as the window wouldn't open either. That same evening, they met their avatars in *Hortublic*. They learned that since this summer, only health visas were available throughout France for travel from one specific city to another, and from Paris, this was currently not possible for all destinations. A local epidemic, which had already claimed many victims in the metropolis, meant that most cities on the high-speed rail network were not issuing any entry visas, even for people with clean medical records. The friends went to Toulouse anyway because they had been given a certain advance to participate in the development of a new communication program between biological and electronic intelligence at the Space Research Center. They had been told that if they refused, the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Sorbonne in Paris would lose funding.

Before Greta and Sérgio can leave the station, they are once again electronically escorted through three security checkpoints. At the last checkpoint, after a few minutes, a series of green LED lights appear on a panel to their left, after which a glass door slides open. Their electronic health visa now displays a warning that if their stay in Barcelona exceeds five days, they must apply for a new visa upon arrival in Lisbon and will be quarantined for ten days, despite any travel documents previously applied for and received.

At Sérgio's insistence, mother and son are staying with the Legendres this time, rather than with Gabriel and Bianca. During their last avatar conversation, shortly before the trip, Inês had told Sérgio she couldn't pick them up at the station because there's currently a ban on contact between city districts. Like all other major Erebúm cities, Barcelona is now administratively divided into districts between which even residents are only allowed to move if they have the correct travel documents, as soon as a virus alert is issued. Inês' father had explained to Greta when they booked their trip, they had to have their visas accompanied by a document granting them access to the District *Montbau-Mundet*. When they

scan at the electronic eye the *Quick Response Code* attached to their documents after passing through the tunnel from Sants station to the doors that give access to the metro, they both receive an electronic card that only gives them access to the line 3 metro carriage *Montbau-Mundet*. The various wagons are programmed to only allow doors to open in stations belonging to the same district.

After half an hour on the train, they get off in Montbau where a very happy Inês is waiting for them in front of the entrance of *Sant Jordí.* Together they walk to Carrer de la Poesia. They cross the Jardins de Montbau towards Inês' parents' house. On the way, Inês tells them that Gabriel and Bianca also moved to this district, where their respective faculties are located. For most permanent staff, this was the obvious solution to avoid being repeatedly banned from the university whenever code orange comes into effect due to the increased risk of infection. This way, they can meet without any further bureaucracy during the five days they will spend together.

During their short walk, Greta and Sérgio notice that the cityscape resembles London's Russell District. Most bars and restaurants are closed. Only *fast food* providers who mainly focus on *takeaway* but also having ample restaurant space, and the small, very exclusive and terribly expensive restaurants still advertise local service, the latter by appointment only. Inês confirms that in Barcelona, too, people almost always stay home. Groceries are delivered by automated deliveries, drones, or computer-controlled vehicles.

The trio enters the spacious two-story apartment. Gabriel, Bianca, and Inês' parents welcome Greta and Sérgio with great joy.

"It seems to be getting harder and harder to give a real hug to friends who don't live next door," says Bianca.

"Yes, Sérgio noted again that we might soon have no trains at all for long-distance travel. It seems like everyone is gradually being locked down and only has a few square kilometers of freedom of movement," Greta replies. "In London, they have started to completely close off certain parts of the metropolis, where the

pressure of the *New Ignorants* has become too big."
"Hey," says Inês' father, "that's new. But not unique. I heard the same is happening in Paris. And I also heard that Brussels now has two parts. *Euro-Brussel* is completely closed off from *Local-Brussel.* Anyone working in the Euro-Brussel zone is strongly advised against visiting Local-Brussel. Moreover, anyone living in Euro-Brussel should avoid traveling anywhere between Rotterdam, Aachen, Luxembourg, Lille, and the French-Belgian-Dutch coast."
"Why?" asks Sérgio.
"To begin with, the entire coastal zone, with its major supply ports, is a region teeming with itinerant, unemployed, ignorant people. They make their living primarily by burglarising container yards and warehouses. The entire wider region is now a gathering place for those who want to escape the control of our increasingly authoritarian governments. I understand that despite the demand for voting by procuration, or perhaps precisely because of it, there are still locally feuding politicians who simply can't seem to sell local policies. In some cities, negotiations about power-sharing sometimes drag on for more than half the time between elections. That's strange. In actual elections days, politicians are practically the only ones who vote, but they naturally try to recruit as many votes by procuration as possible. The result is that afterward, almost everyone accuses the other of falsifying the election results. No one seems able to grasp that they are destroying their entire edifice themselves and that their power ultimately depends solely on who pushes them forward behind the scenes. Among the *New Ignorants* for whose children there is less and less decent schooling, you either have someone who isolates himself from everything or someone whose sole goal is to destroy all structures."
"Explain a bit more," asks Greta.
"The *Institute for Social Endemic Diseases* has several teams of interesting researchers today. We know some of them. We meet regularly in the *Hortublic,*" Bianca joins the conversation. "A lot of

work is being done on profiling the *New Ignorants*, but also on the *Arrogant Ignorants* and what they call nowadays *Arrogant Deceivers.* Apparently, they mainly belong in the bottom group of wealthy individuals according to the Bloomberg scale [see annexes book 9 - note Maria Liber].

Then there are the Ignorants who isolate themselves. These are rather nonviolent groups of people who are simply tired of being quarantined constantly. Especially in the Ardennes, the Kempen region, and the region between the Meuse and Scheldt, there are communities in villages and sparsely populated places that rely on a kind of local survival economy. They try to make themselves invisible to bureaucracy and administration. Their property usually consists of a private community center and some land for a horticulture. In the last twenty years, a kind of nonviolent purge has reportedly taken place in many of these places. Gossip and neighbourly gossip caused more conscious residents to move. In this process, forms of intellectual clusters often emerged within the metropolises, primarily around the existing colleges, of course, in the specific Local-Brussel district. But Ghent, Leuven, Lille, Aachen, and Luxembourg are also becoming a kind of "free" cities, where both *Euro-Brussel* and local authorities have little control over.

Yet it is precisely those communities of non-aggressive *New Ignorants* in *Intellectual Knowers* who easily maintain contact with each other. Both population groups of the Low Countries (Western Erebúm) share the same rejection of violence."

Inês' father takes over again: "You also have the *Destructive Ignorants.* Oddly enough, these were initially the most radical followers of populist politicians. Those now seem to be falling out of favour among their own followers. Many of the radical followers apparently found the political policies of the last twenty years too lax. Gradually, they organised themselves into smaller groups under more aggressive leaders and revolted against both their former leaders and all those who portrayed their former and current

leaders as dangerous. They claim to take the law into their own hands because they were never given justice. They are strongly reminiscent of the *Vineland Ignorants*, sometimes even to groups led by warlords in certain areas of the Alkebulan or Waçúm continent. Although they are still weakly armed, they often chant the same kind of slogans based on religious or non-religious dogmas. They generally possess less than the nonviolent *New Ignorants.* But they crave status symbols more. That's why they live primarily near buildings and warehouses that can be looted. Destroying structures has become a means to an end for them. They consistently adopt one guideline from populist leaders: beware of intellectuals, they are dangerous. After all, they invent all sorts of things to make life impossible for ordinary people, themselves. They patronise, they enslave, they teach moral lessons; they are the source of all evil. That's why it's so hard for to make contact with these *Destructive Ignorant* groups."

"But the researchers at the *Institute for Social Endemic Diseases* are worried," says Inês' mother now. "They point out that what is happening in the Low Countries is spreading to Erebúm, which is centrally governed from the Euro-Brussels border. By some estimates, it would take only one generation, and certainly less than two, for these kinds of violent *New Ignorant* groups to take over almost anywhere where large groups of people live. You see the phenomenon in the United States, in the Russian Empire, in the densely populated North and South of the Alkebulan continent, and everywhere in Waçúm, except in China. These violent groups are even active where a strong authoritarian central government uses the virus plagues to increasingly deprive people of their freedom of movement. These groups chant the slogan '*Better free and infected than imprisoned and vaccinated'*. And by screaming so, they're turning the doubt about whether or not they're infected into a weapon, with which they increasingly frighten anxious property owners. The irony of this whole affair is that the wealthy - and by

that I mean the few percent who make up the select upper crust of the Bloomberg scale - are beginning to seclude themselves in luxurious gated communities. You find these condominiums in the United States of America; there are the New Dachas in the Russian Empire, the New Forbidden Cities in China, and the Palace Cities in the Indian Empire."

"That sounds all so negative. Can we still escape to some fun?" asks Sérgio.

"Yes," agrees Inês, "sometimes I think I might feel better to disappear to one of those non-violent community of *New Ignorants*".

"I can understand you very well," says Greta. "It seems like no fun at all to be a young adolescent today with access to knowledge and science. I grew up shortly after the climate activists such as Greta Thunberg tried to draw attention to the excesses of the destructive capitalist system. Generally speaking, we were optimistic back then, and some of us still are. Perhaps we trusted too much the group of economists who assumed that the capitalist system would gradually regulate itself after it gained planetary dominance. I myself was raised by my parents and Grandpa Paulo with the idea that the capitalist world system would take Bregman proposals into account. Until now, that has happened very rarely, and now it's going the other way around. The arrogant people angling for autocracy are simply too powerful. Or perhaps they aren't powerful enough to transform what they themselves have caused into a more humane society. A kind of apartment-cat utopia, as Mom and Aunt Joana put it, might certainly seem appealing to you."

Gabriel smiles. "But we remain convinced that we'd better continue working towards the cooperative, pluralistic utopia, wouldn't you say, Greta?"

Inês gets up and asks Sérgio if he wants to come up to the roof terrace. They'd agreed earlier to listen to some music and share their new discoveries. Together, they leave the room.

The adults continued their conversation.

“That utopia seems further away today than it did at the beginning of the century,” says Greta. “Catherine and Joana Demeester present the end of the last century ignarometrically as follows: in the green, not very ignorant, not very arrogant part, you had a fairly large group of emerging democracies and a fairly small group of democracies at the end of their cycle. Few people still know that exactly one hundred years ago, *Institutional Pedagogy* saw the light of day. That cooperative movement within education seemed at the time a stepping stone to the era of the learner. The cooperative learning individual nourishes the green corner at the bottom left of the ignarometric framework. The small underclass of intellectual utopias, toward cooperative pluralism, is not desired by those in power, but developed nonetheless. The utopia still exists but is not gaining new adherents. The utopia of fascist societies present in the upper class also existed then, but many believed that the rapprochement toward the realisation of that utopia was being controlled by the democratic rulers. People still truly believed in the protective influence of organisations like the OECD or the United Nations with its Security Council, funds, and agencies, of which we still remember the Children’s Fund, the Food Fund, UNESCO, and the International Monetary Fund. But what happened with the IMF shows how people underestimate the impact of the utopia of totalitarian states in their early stages, situated on the right within the ignarometric framework. In a sense, it absorbed democracies at the end of their cycle more easily than the pluralistic utopia.”

“Do you think this shift towards totalitarian central control is the result of mistakes made out of ignorance, or is it a deliberate manipulation?” asks Inês’ mother.

“I must honestly admit that I am not well informed about what the Institute for Social Endemic Diseases is doing at the moment,” Greta begins. “But I make the connection with what I heard from Steven Bird and what my Parisian friends staying in Toulouse told me

through a *Hortublic* conversation. There are increasing rumours circulating that Bloomberg's management is pulling the wool over our eyes with its charitable projects and the associated funding of certain universities and faculties.

Gabriel nods: "The ongoing epidemics have caused serious social disruption, with the modern middle class practically disappearing. Ironically, the wealthy elite, which derives its wealth from owning production units and institutions that provide service packages for what the middle class consumes en masse, is experiencing a difficult time. Of course, this elite continues to amass all the capital and assets, but that ownership is partly a distorted image. It's more about an implanted idea, an all-encompassing belief, than a tangible reality. The economy, funds, and projects today operate with large digital monetary transactions, and you don't really know exactly what assets they rely on. It's increasingly a culturally perpetuated construct."

Bianca then says: "I've noticed that there's an increasing search for more efficient communication models between biological and electronic intelligence. To achieve what? Generalised information based on the perspectives of that wealthy elite? With the aim of creating mass social untruth? Abolishing schools and replacing them with distance learning is just one aspect of the ongoing manipulation.

Greta resumes: "Steven speaks about *Bloomcamp* by which he means the "luxury sanctuary" for those whose net worth is between 8 and 11 on the Bloomberg scale. This luxury sanctuary consists of various condominiums around the world, between which its residents travel discreetly but without restriction. They do so using ultrafast air vehicles that fly in the stratosphere or higher. According to Steven, there are persistent attempts to acquire a technology — perhaps extraterrestrial —described by Victor Hunt. This technology would achieve vertical takeoff by exploiting variations in the local suspension of the laws of gravity. And that is also supposedly the

reason for attracting these communications specialists. It has to do, among other things, with the further development of electronic super-brains that must cooperate with human biological brains."

The others look surprised. Gabriel then says, "Of course. That explains why luxury insulation is really being implemented. And to make that possible, the other isolation, from the rest of the world's population, is an inevitable correlation. The increasing division into districts in major cities naturally encourages such isolation. I don't mean to say we should pretend pandemics don't exist, but they are certainly very useful."

Greta now says: "Steven keeps talking about how the rural population is becoming increasingly cut off from the urban population. The extensive automation of local agriculture, the supply of basic products by carefully screened teams, and the cultivation of fear of the proliferation of new viruses mean that there is virtually no contact between rural producers, ergo local rural communities, and urban consumers. These rural communities are completely reliant on distance learning, which naturally makes them more susceptible to manipulation. The information that many *Hortublic* groups make available for free on the world wide web is of little use if people are not trained to think critically."

Five days later, Greta and Sérgio leave their friends. Inês walks with them to the same metro station where she picked them up. The two young people struggle with the farewell. They don't know if they'll see each other again in six months. It's not at all clear whether Greta and Sérgio will be able to travel easily from Lisbon back to London. And it's even less clear whether they'll be allowed to break their journey in Barcelona. February is a month in the Northern Hemisphere when viruses and pathogenic bacteria thrive. And these days, it doesn't take much to infect social networks with disinformation. A small local biological or informational infection can easily grow into a dangerous pandemic once a few posts go viral.

On July 29, 2061, the nearly invisible Halley's Comet will approach Earth within 0.48 astronomical units, causing the annual anxiety psychosis and making travel completely impossible for ordinary people this year. Alexandre and Catherine recall those days spent lying on their backs stargazing in southern Portugal with Paulo Demeester, and how he would have been irritated by the mystical interpretation of a supposedly deathly passing celestial body...

The consolidation of the mega-poleis(2063-2070)

Inês Legendre wistfully ends her avatar conversation with Sérgio Mestre's avatar. They've just learned they might not be able to meet in person this summer either. It's been three years since they spent five short days together at Inês' house in Barcelona.

Sérgio walks angrily into the living room.

"What's wrong?" Greta asks her son.

"Inês is sad, and I'm sick and tired of not having seen each other in years. We both had plans to celebrate my eighteenth birthday together. And if we didn't get a visa for Barcelona fore August the last two years, we probably won't get one for September in 2063 either.

Greta sighs. It's also the first time since she joined the universities of London and Lisbon that they've had to spend two full years in Lisbon. Greta hasn't been able to meet her English students except by video call through the official course channels. For informal conversations, she has to rely on the *Hortublic*. The Central Health Service had strongly advised her against the trip to London two years ago in February, despite the fact that she still enjoys a preferential treatment regime because she works at two recognised universities. But she sensed the arrogant undertone: why on earth should she receive a travel credit for of all people a handful of *education* students who were also doing internships at schools that may be closed in a few years. She was explained in detail that a new virus is spreading in the United Kingdom and that the Central Health Service doesn't want human movement to and from the mainland to prevent contamination on the mainland.

Greta felt how the misleading information was used without hesitation. The virologists who are part of the *Hortublic* community often warns against the tactics used by the Central Government and local authorities. Since the last century, it has been known that

viruses use host animals to spread. Until the middle of this century, plants were not seen as direct carriers. Only fungi could potentially transmit a pathogen to humans. The intermediary role of certain insects in transmitting viruses dangerous to humans that hide in plants is also known. But in the last ten years, there have been increasing indications that viruses present in plant spores sometimes jump directly to humans. A skin wound can be sufficient. A body weakened by another disease is easy prey. Simply inhaling airborne plant spores is enough. In densely populated areas, a single infected person can then very easily start a local epidemic. Due to climate changes over the last fifty years, strong winds from one single direction can sometimes persist for weeks. These carry plant spores. Researchers increasingly assume that many emerging major epidemics in major cities are not brought in by a traveller from outside the area, but originate from a sick person living within the area after inhaling spores that transmit viruses. More critical intellectuals are convinced that travel bans these days have little to do with health. In-person encounters at conferences, universities, and scientific meetings, and the associated conversations, are more difficult to track than internet *Hortublic* traffic. The users of *Hortublic* are well aware that little escapes the attention of the Central Government. Even the use of avatars in areas of rapidly expanding digital worlds protected by VPN techniques cannot be kept completely anonymous. Spies are everywhere. Well-shielded chat rooms where only limited groups of avatars of colleagues or friends who have met in person beforehand are not immune to digital intrusion and associated eavesdropping techniques. The Central Governments of the major world powers are seeking scientists to advocate for their interests. Infiltration into the *Hortublic* is simply cheaper and more efficient than spying on gatherings of all kinds in the physical world.

And yet, it's still possible to obtain travel permits in certain cases. Local governments even deliberately use them to contain discontent

among Knowers. Governments aren't concerned about Docile New Ignorants. The misleading campaigns simply make them too afraid to even consider traveling outside their district. For Aggressive New Ignorants, there's another solution. They are incorporated into law enforcement or encouraged to embark on long-distance flights to Mars or one of Jupiter's two moons. Here and there, relatively small groups of Ignorants flee the city. They then end up in a local rural community. Oligarchs and authoritarian governments are even less concerned about this. They are seen as people who have voluntarily chosen to exclude themselves from the capitalist system. They don't mind living a poor life without money or substantial resources. This, the local government argue, actually makes them more susceptible to infection. Or they'll fall from the frying pan into the fire and find themselves under the yoke of some petty autocrat. The privileged classes share the same view. They see their opinions confirmed by the reverse process. There are still those who leave the rural areas to settle in the ever-growing metropolises. Those who take that step bring with them true horror stories about life outside the city. And both city dwellers and their governments show little interest in investigating these stories and separating truth from fantasy.

The relatively easygoing apartment-cat lifestyle means that newcomers readily accept the permanent hostage situation in the district they end up in. They typically quickly take on jobs as home-based workers, with minimal travel, employed by a service-pack provider. They receive a modest salary that allows for basic consumerism. Moreover, local governments in major cities provide sufficient free events to prevent uprisings.

"I'll see if I can get something through the university," Greta consoles her son. "I might not get a visa as an editor of *Ignarysis* and certainly not just for a casual visit to friends. But I think I can manage to persuade the deans of the Faculty of Educational Sciences in Lisbon and Barcelona to arrange a trip as part of a new

study project on communication. Bianca recently started a *think tank* with ethologists and specialists in electronic intelligence. Our university was also approached. They want to connect with specialists in self-learning electronic communities." As she says this, Greta has to smile. Sometimes it's fun to pull the wool over the eyes of those arrogant administrators who love fancy titles. She herself has recently been recognised as a consultant for programmers in such communities, while all that consultant stuff is often nothing more than hot air wrapped in a pretty gift paper.

"Do you think you can do that? Uncle Alexandre recently told me that your activities with the Library House haven't been very well received by the local government. And they have to grant the visa, right?"

"The local government is more likely to block entry visas. Exit visas are easier to obtain, especially for someone they'd rather want to see to leave. If the destination government responds positively or requests the transfer themselves, the visa is quickly processed. Barcelona won't throw many obstacles in our way. The Dean of Bianca's faculty is eager to accommodate the European Central Government. Our health is fine. We stayed in Lisbon for two years, and at the moment, only London is a "red zone" as far as we're concerned. Without a local epidemic alert, I might manage. And if Lisbon makes it difficult for us to return afterward, we'll simply go to London, as soon as that famous communication project seems sufficiently interesting to other local governments. The worst that can happen is that we won't be able to leave the island for a while after that."

"But Mom, then we won't be able to travel next year either."

"Let's start with one issue and think about the others later. You'd like to celebrate your birthday with our friends and Inês, rather than here with your family, right?"

Sérgio blushes a little: "Inês and I would really like to see each other again, Mom."

“Then we’ll take care of that first. Is that okay?”

Early September 2063, Greta and Sérgio board the train in the carriage for Barcelona. There is also one carriage for Madrid, one for Toulouse, and one for Paris. The infection rate is currently low in both Lisbon and Barcelona. Therefore, both have a health visa that allows them to leave their train compartment and have lunch in the Barcelona section of the dining car. Furthermore, the electronic conductor informs them that there are only about ten passengers in their carriage, making it easy to comply with the rule of only accommodating no more then four passengers at a time in the dining car. The train stops only in Madrid before continuing to Barcelona. Their journey takes just over five hours. Not much has changed at Sants Station in the last four years. The route electronically linked to their travel visa, just like the last time, gives access to the metro carriage to the *Montbau-Mundet* District.

The park is an oasis of peace and coolness in the hot late summer of Barcelona.

That morning, Inês suggested Sérgio to walk with Bianca and Greta to the Faculty of Educational Sciences on Campus Mundet. After that, they could continue their walk to the nearby *Parc del Laberint d’Horta.*

Sérgio walked into the faculty library while Inês and Bianca went to the dining room to get sandwiches and bottled water. Shortly after, she finds him in front of the shelves of educational sociology. He had been looking briefly at the Spanish-French translations of *Ignarysis.* He leafed through the pages before tackling a thesis by Abigail Blum, a young researcher affiliated with the *Institute for Social Endemic Diseases*. It wasn’t just the Jewish name that caught his attention. His mother once told him that the Palestinian physician Izzeldin Abuelaish had initiated the institute in response to the nearly century-long war of attrition between strict Orthodox Jewish militias, often covered by the government, and extremist

Palestinian organisations. This war, which resulted in complete catastrophe for both the Palestinian population and the peace-loving segment of the Jewish diaspora, was in turn the aftermath of an arrogant Erebúm colonisation policy in the zone between the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River basin, originated by the Nazis' mass slaughter, not only of Jews living in Erebúm but of all people whom the then-ruling Germanic nationalists considered subhuman. Sadly, a number of descendants who received this label later became aggressive nationalists themselves, just as readily regarding others as subhumans to be exterminated.

What also caught Sérgio's attention on the title page of the thesis was a second name: Ester Langlauf. Great-aunt Joana still spoke of Ester, her source of inspiration for writing the *Charter of the Learner*. He writes down the title of the work and decides to send a message to his great-aunt.

Abigail Blum apparently used *ignarometrics*. In her introduction, Ester provides a brief note on the development of this instrument before discussing the historical importance of Blum's work. A quick consultation at the *who is who* university library's database, learns Sérgio that Abigail is currently affiliated to the University of London. He notes down her information, intending to look her up as soon as he gets the chance.

The entire walk from the university library to the *Jardí Romàntic* in the park, Sérgio talks about the ignarometric framework and the four utopias the Demeester sisters associated with it. Inês asks what Sérgio knows more about Ester. He says he knows that Ester and Great-Aunt Joana almost forty years ago published *Hearing Deaf and Deaf Hearers or the Art of Communicating*. Nowadays researchers often use the term *hearing deaf* to refer to the growing population that ignores all indices that the small elite group of wealthy property owners is increasingly adopting a totalitarian attitude towards the disappearing middle class.

They sit down to have a picnic.

Inês explains how Gabriel, Bianca, and her parents always make time to review the study topics assigned to her during the digital lessons of the past two years. They also ensure that Inês can meet peers now that social interaction at school is practically nonexistent. Bianca, in particular, often talks about the need to communicate, and that communication is more than just exchanging news.

Sérgio smiles and blushes slightly as he answers: “I always notice that you make communication a priority when our avatars meet. When I tell you something, you always ask a lot of questions, and when you tell me something, it’s never expressed in just a few words. I often sense that you’re genuinely concerned about whether what you’ve said is truly clear to me. Conversely, I know you also want to be sure you’ve truly understood me.”

Inês takes Sérgio’s hand and says, “You’re sometimes a little confused in your explanations. And you're so cute when you start stuttering about something. I know then that you’re thinking out loud, and it’s nice to know that during our avatar conversations. But I like the way you think out loud even more when you’re trying to explain things to me when we’re together, like now.”

“Uncle Alexandre says he recognises himself in me. As a little boy, I was very much like him, he says. I often have to start a sentence over ten times before I can say what I’m thinking. And not everyone had the patience to give me time. And ever since we went on that first trip to Paris with your aunt, I felt how you always patiently waited to say something until you were sure I’d finished talking… and that’s always been the case…”

“Always is now eight years…”

“It would be nice if it could last for many more years…”

“And why wouldn’t it? What are you thinking about?”

“I think about how hard it is to know in advance when we’ll see each other… I’m so afraid that the day will come when it’s no

longer possible to go and see someone you love, unless you happen to live in the same area or district."
"Are you afraid of that in general?"
"In general, yes, but also in particular," says Sérgio, looking at Inês.
"Then we better not let that happen for either of us," Inês replies. "Apparently, Bianca and your mother are good at obtaining the necessary visas. For now, you don't have to worry."
"For now?"
"Crazy boy, for now is now and whatever comes later, will come later."
Inês stands up and pulls Sérgio to his feet. She then wraps her arms around his neck and rests her head on his shoulder. He gently touches her hair. A moment later, she lifts her head and they kiss. Then they look at each other for a long time.
"Communicate," Inês says then, "but only with the eyes."
Sérgio takes both of her hands and pulls her firmly toward him, then strokes her back. "And with his hands too."
Inês breaks away and starts laughing. "Or else…" and she starts running. He follows her. A moment later, they sit under a tree. She leans against him. They sit quietly for a while. They kiss again, then stand up and walk back hand in hand. Suddenly, Inês laughs again: "Should we ask our dear parents to make sure we stay together?"
Sérgio also laughs: "Maybe we'll say it a little more clearly so they don't think we need some kind of chaperone. Or the other way around, that we just had a fight."
"Dear people, Sérgio and I are a little bit in love with each other and so we would like to live in the same city."
"A little bit in love?"
"Crazy, I love you so much and I want you close to me."
"And I'd love to have you around all the time."
"So?"
"So, dear parents, do you know that we love each other very much and that we want to be together?"

In one of the small faculty offices, Bianca is talking to Greta. It's a bit disturbing to hear what Bianca has learned since their last meeting. She immediately adds that there are things she's not want to talk about in the *Hortublic* meetings. They know they're pretty well protected behind their avatar, but still. The risk of digital contamination is real.

"I'm pretty sure my source is reporting accurate information," Bianca begins. "Even more difficult times are coming."

"So those rumours that, at least in Erebúm, India and China, people will actually be stuck in closed communities are not unfounded?"

"No. And you know that mobility in other parts of the world is already rather limited for other reasons."

"But that's bad, Bianca. If that plan actually goes through, the manipulation will become even easier."

And that's not the worst of it. I recently learned at our department that all data regarding ancient DNA research has been requested. You know, that DNA research that paleoanthropology has been working with for the past sixty years to get a more accurate picture of the distribution of Neanderthal genes in modern humans."

"And why is that worse than manipulation?"

"The two laboratories that requested the data are affiliated with classified military projects. We've known for some time that people with certain Neanderthal gene remnants are more susceptible to specific viral infections with fatal outcomes. On the other hand, Neanderthal gene remnants can also have a protective effect. This is a fairly public fact that was already being discussed after the first major pandemic of our century, caused by a SARS variant."

"That would mean that…"

"You can go in two directions… you can think of the production of viruses that have less effect on a population with more Neanderthal material, but also the other way around."

"And you anthropologists and paleoanthropologists suspect that the data retrievals are related to that kind of production? You think

viruses are being deliberately released in certain areas?"
"Exactly. We've heard from a very reliable source that there's speculation about how to confine parts of the population to certain areas, far from the districts of the wealthy class. This way, they could be made sick or…"
"Or infect fatally?"
"Yes. We have information…"
"We?"
Bianca laughs briefly.
"Or *Hortublic* has many ramifications, Greta, and that is necessary today. We have information that *Aggressive Ignorants* are being trained to integrate a repression force under orders from the Central Governments in Erebúm, Waçúm, Vineland, and Southern Alkebulan. These forces are available to the major urban areas and can quickly deploy lethal weapons. A government can use counterintelligence and explain that "eliminating" virus carriers from a certain zone is the only way to keep other zones free of disease."
Greta nods: "That's very strong, what you are saying. I know of course the elite is currently focusing on those areas where they suspect the population could remain potentially dangerous despite the disinformation campaigns. Central and local governments are not bothered much by small groups who, in a sense, exclude themselves by setting up a kind of cooperative living community. But in large urban areas, uprisings are, of course, always possible. Led by whom? By Knowers? By members of the *Hortublic ?* I don't think so."
"As you know, the wealthy elite has a love-hate relationship with us. On the one hand, they need researchers and science, but on the other, they know that those driven by curiosity constantly ask critical questions. The power holders want intellectuals in universities, but critical intellectuals pose a threat. Remember how that wonderboy's entire empire collapsed twenty years ago?"

“The wonderboy?”
“Yes, who acquired Bloomberg 2 status through electric cars and electronic apps and then allied himself with a quasi-totalitarian regime.”
“Wait a moment. Didn’t he lay the foundation for the commercialisation of space travel? Yeah, my mother’s friend Steven Bird talks about him sometimes. Wasn’t his name Muscle, or something like that?”
Bianca laughs. “Something like that,” she says. “Well, contemporary history shows us that he made a dramatic miscalculation. His wealth was partly based on who could be considered environmentally conscious and critical consumers. That seems like a contradiction in terms, but until the late 2030s, there were groups of people who called themselves conscious consumers. They maintained the paradigm of sophisticated individual transport but preferred electric cars over fossil fuel cars. The most frequent argument was that this was the only solution as long as there was no efficient public transport network. Major investors cleverly exploited these semi-environmentally conscious consumers. Think of how electricity from wind and solar farms became a kind of hype. Investors preferred to profit quickly from the sale of individual cars and the use of existing road infrastructure. There was little interest in developing additional infrastructure for rapid electric public transport. The sale of aircraft for stratospheric air transport for individuals or small groups was another lucrative business.”
“Just as now, both the ignorant and the knowledgeable used social networks extensively, each with their own preferences for certain apps. One of the more lucrative apps, often used by the knowledgeable, was acquired by the same electric car investor.”
“And then things went wrong.”
“Yes, things went wrong for him back then. To keep it simple: by allying himself with a quasi-totalitarian regime with sometimes

fascist overtones, the critical consumers responsible for a large portion of his wealth turned away from him. He quickly plummeted off the Bloomberg scale. Today, his rise and fall is a case study. One of the consequences is that environmentally conscious choice slogans were no longer used in publicity. In the short term, a sensitive audience seems like a good investment. The slogans only resonate with those who make conscious choices. Making those choices requires a critical mind, and a population with too much critical sense is precisely what the elite wants to get rid of. You can't expect critical people to consume uncritically for long."

"That is clear. And today we see that dismantling school systems does not make the wealthy elite poorer. Forcing children to take instruction *on line* after the pandemics of the 2030s, schooling has become a doubly lucrative business. Licenses must be paid for the use of e-textbooks and teaching platforms. Every new tablet, mobile phone, or computer model is a sought-after status symbol for many. Today, *New Ignorants,* adolescents and adults, spent most of disposable income on electronic gadgets and *on line* transactions involving all sorts of mandatory and optional service packs. The biggest profits today are to be made from the massive sale to an urban population of primarily intangible products whose logos carry high status value."

"You're helping to uncover the entire mechanism through the cooperative learning communities you've guided and studied over the years. That's why I'm amazed by your amazement at what lies behind the entire concentration project."

"You know, Bianca, I consider myself an optimist. But it's possible that my optimism is partly based on my naivety."

"And I'm happy to count someone with your optimism among my work and friends. I think that's why you succeed in achieving small things with great symbolic value that I quickly consider impossible. Your presence here today in Barcelona, for example."

Naturally, Sérgio and Inês are even happier about this, and for a

completely different reason. That evening, they sit hand in hand between their parents and talk about their dream of staying together. Greta looks at her son with a somewhat tender look and says to Inês' mother: "Bianca told me today that my optimism can help me achieve things that sometimes seem impossible. If I'm right, Inês can start college in about two years, isn't it?"
Before her mother can answer, Inês nods and says, "I'd love to study communications, with you, if possible, Greta. And I'd love to meet Sérgio's grandmother and your aunt. But then I'd have to be able to travel to London and Lisbon, right?" she adds with a mischievous look.
"That's quite a program," Greta laughs. "It's still a bit early for concrete steps, but if your parents agree, I'll put out some feelers here and there to see what I can do for you once you have the necessary credits to start higher education."
Inês' parents nod to Greta with a smile, after which Inês jumps up, hugs her parents, hugs Greta and then gives Sérgio a kiss.
"Are you crying, mom?" asks Sérgio.
"Yes," Gabriel remarks with a quip, "she weeps, not for flowers broken in the bud, but for love blossomed in the garden," after which three pillows are thrown at his head.

Despite all the promises and prospects, tears still fall when Greta and Sérgio say goodbye at the entrance of the metro station *Montbau*. Of course the young people in particular are having a very difficult period. In the coming times, they will once again only be able to meet each other through their avatars. At Bianca's suggestion, their parents have explained to them that it's best not to discuss future plans during regular video calls. All communications from family members affiliated with universities are regularly monitored by the security services of local and central governments. And of course, everyone involved in *Ignarysis* is known for being extremely critical. Moreover, Sérgio is the grandson of Catherine Demeester and is starting a sociology degree. That alone makes him

a *hot target.*
As Greta predicted, mother and son are denied visas to return to Lisbon. They are, however, granted permission for London. There, Greta resumes her mentoring duties, this year with only six students. She agrees with Joana that she will contribute remotely to the Lisbon semester if she cannot return to the Iberian Peninsula in time.

Two years pass. Sérgio starts his third year of university in September. He's known among his fellow students as a passionate conversationalist when it comes to sociometry in general and ignarometry in particular. Since their visit to Barcelona, he did not leave *Megaludein* one's. That's now the administrative name for a large city that extends even further than what was commonly called Greater London until last year.
The Erebúm Central Government has consolidated its grip on all the areas with the highest population concentrations. Suddenly, and in a very short time, health and safety became the reason to abolish all direct elections for local governments. By skilfully using straw men, the Erebúm Central Government last year succeeded in introducing an electorate system modeled on the former United States of America. According to one of Sérgio's teachers the system can even be compared to a return to the tax system. Only those with Bloomberg number 8 or more can be elected. The votes cast determine the composition of a college of electors. Last summer's elections yielded the results the critical Knowers expected. Their own votes were lost in a certain sense. Among the Ignorants, as always, there were two groups. The largest group did not exercise their right to vote. A slightly smaller group faithfully followed the instructions of the authoritarian populist leaders. This resulted in each in *megadistrict* only those electors whose mandates were confirmed by the members of the Central Government were put forward. For the first time, no polling stations were established outside the megalopoleis. Local governments were told that the

health risk was too great. Small rural communities were said to consist mainly of unvaccinated and unvetted individuals. An exception was made for the loyal managers of robot-controlled plantations that supply the megapoleis with food. They live in closed areas and could cast their votes electronically. For the rest, there was virtually no contact with the rural population. The Central Government cleverly uses sociological studies to portray a segment of this population as dangerous *outlaws* which do not mind of the others and another part as a kind of degenerate nature lovers who had last century *flower power* as a model. It's better to keep those separate, too. Imagine they infect the urban population with some of their ideas…

Immediately after last summer's elections, drastic decisions were made in Greater Erebúm: from north to south and from east to west, megapoleis became the only administrative units. Local governments were thus absorbed into metropolitan governments. Legal travel to and from these cities had long been possible only with health visas. Now, a morality visa is also available. It's not very difficult to leave a megalopolis and join a rural community somewhere, but it's virtually impossible to return to a megalopolis afterward. Checks occur almost everywhere and unexpectedly every day. The snitch system works perfectly, and law enforcement has no difficulty investigating anyone reported by a neighbour as having been absent for an extended period or who suddenly found a place of residence nearby. Such individuals are usually taken away in handcuffs and dropped off in more remote rural areas.

Today there are only four megapoleis on the Iberian Peninsula. *Megalissipo* is the smallest one. In the midwestern part of the Erebúm continent are *Megaludein* in *Megaparisios,* two large megapoleis. In each of these major cities, there is a district with still-active universities. In some districts, primary and secondary schooling is even provided in school buildings.

The largest European megapoleis is *Megabelgium.* It stretches from

what was formerly Rotterdam to Lille and from the North Sea coast to Luxembourg. The Central Erebúm Administration is located there in the special district *Eurobrussel*. That's a kind of forbidden city, like in former empires. Forbidden cities, in the form of heavily guarded closed districts are on the rise on every continent. The Central Authorities are shutting themselves in. They are the only districts that have a limited connection with *Bloomcamp* condominiums. In Megabelgium, academic activity has since been moved to the Ghent and Liège districts. Some departments opted for *Megaludein* of *Megaparisios.*

The changes came as an unexpected benefit to Inês and Sérgio. The Faculty of Educational Sciences, to which Inês' parents are affiliated, is being closed. Those wishing to continue research in that field have three options: *Megaparisios*, *Megaludein* or *Megandalusalgarb.* The friends choose Megaludein, and at the end of March 2065, the Legendres move into an apartment in the Russell District. Bianca and Gabriel follow their friends a month later for an indefinite period. Inês and Sérgio are inseparable. Sérgio has a permanent place at the Legendres, and Greta jokingly notes that the closets in their apartment are increasingly filled with Inês' things. In late summer of the same year, Inês begins studying communication sciences.

The planet's hydrocarbon reserves have dwindled so much that fossil fuels are now a rarity. Strategic reserves of various fuels, currently needed for aerospace, are stored in secret locations.

In this sector, the search for alternatives continues. Nowadays, all travel beyond Earth occurs in two phases. Relatively small shuttle vehicles transport people and goods to smaller space stations in geostationary orbit. From there, they travel either to larger stations on the moon and, more recently, to *Lagrange 1* of *Lagrange 2* of the Earth-moon system or to spacecrafts temporarily placed in geostationary orbit preparing for a journey to Mars. Jupiter's moons Ganymede and Europa are currently only accessible to a very select

group of researchers and investors, protected by soldiers trained out of Aggressive Ignorants. Among the smaller crafts, an operational model based on electromagnetic propulsion seems to exist today. True spacecrafts, as Steven Bird puts it when discussing crafts that never land on solid ground, derive their thrust from a combination of electromagnetic, nuclear, and ionic energy sources.

Some megapoleis allow the use of public vehicles with modified combustion engines to run on recycled vegetable oils. Personal electric vehicles are still permitted in virtually all megapoleis. However, they are heavily taxed, meaning in practice they only serve a relatively limited group of customers. Public transport consists mainly of underground and overground electric metro trains and magnetic levitation trains. Between megapoleis, travel options are very limited. The motorways have fallen into disuse. Some roads are being converted into high-speed train or magnetic levitation train routes in areas where no high-speed public transport connection existed. Energy-efficient aircraft are much smaller today than, say, forty years ago. Long distances over land are traveled exclusively by train. Between the *Bloomcamp* condominiums and between *Bloomcamp* and the Forbidden Cities fly personal planes and helicopters.

Rural areas throughout Erebúm are depopulating, including the archipelago containing Megaludein. The main difference here remains that Megaludein itself and other megapoleis maintain their distance from the Central Erebúm Government. The four existing Local Governments on the archipelago still report to a ruling royal house, supported by a parliament. This government does participate in the Central Defence System, which succeeded NATO, and in the coordination within the European Climate, Disasters, and Food Institute. The main Local Government is exclusively concerned with *Megaludein*. This megapolis extends across the south of the archipelago, bordered by the former municipalities of Clacton-on-Sea, Colchester, Luton, Reading, Southampton, and Portsmouth, and

the entire coastline between The Solent and both banks of the Colne Estuary. Eight-tenths of the islands' population currently lives here. Megaludein is the largest megapolis on Erebúm after Megabelgium in terms of area, but has a larger population. And even in this area under the same Local Government, many people almost never leave the boundaries of their own district.

Windsor is an exclusive *Bloomcamp* Condominium. Some parts of the former inner London are Forbidden City and accessible only to the local government. Bloomberg 7+ value holders are mainly located in the Belgravia-Chelsea District and the Hampstead-Islington District. Although there are still underground stops with exclusive carriages, almost no one ever gets on or off these. The platforms at St. Pancras for these destinations also generally remain empty. Both districts have helicopter facilities to the only remaining airport on the archipelago. According to analysts, holders of 5 and 6 values have become so scarce in Megaludein that they have ended up in the districts for the 2 to 4 value groups.

Inês, Sérgio, and their family rarely leave the Russell District. Not because they are strictly forbidden to do so at least during the six-month validity of their health visas, but because they can easily walk from home to work or study. A few years later, Alberto and Catherine also moved in. They were able to exchange their apartment for a place on Frederick Street. Catherine is still active as a supervisor of researchers in the sociology of education. Most of the people she supervises are affiliated with the *Institute of Education* and can visit Catherine without difficulty whenever they wish.

Over time, the Russell District has become the home and workplace of most of the socially critical analysts in Megaludein and of a significant portion of the *Hortublic*-members who reside on the Island. According to Catherine, this naturally also makes them more vulnerable. A simple power outage in the District is enough to isolate almost the entire British branch of *Ignarysis* from the rest of the world. Sérgio and Inês recognise the danger but somewhat

downplay Catherine's fears. Although the Local Government is also increasingly showing arrogant tendencies, for the time being it is still composed of members of a political class that discreetly maintains contact with more critical scholars, including those in the humanities. These contacts are not made for humanitarian reasons, but because the politicians do not want to jeopardise their own power by forming imprudent alliances with *Arrogant Knowers* and populist leaders now that they depend on electors. According to Sérgio, and he is echoed by his mother and Gabriel and Bianca, there is a delicate win-win situation and it will remain that way for some time.

As Inês progresses in her studies, she spends more and more time with Sérgio's grandparents. Not only is she always delighted to hear Catherine talk about the development of ignarometry, but she is also captivated by Alberto's stories. His work with electronic intelligence and his reflections on the complementarity between electronic and biologically structured brains are closely related to her own interests and field of study. They often discuss how both types of brains analyse information to construct hypotheses from all the data. In doing so, they primarily attempt to better understand human action and biologically driven behaviour in general. A significant portion of their discussions revolves around manipulation. This, of course, is something that preoccupies all ignarometricians. Is manipulation an outgrowth of a cultural phenomenon, or is it a cultural fact in itself? There is strong evidence that directing other minds to adopt an idea is directly proportional to keeping those same minds scientifically ignorant. But is that in itself a cultural evolution? Is the shift from cooperative decision-making to representative governance, and from there to autocratic governance, a cultural evolution? Or is it simply an outgrowth of stalled evolution resulting from the interplay of biologically and electronically driven minds? Alberto suspects an information paradox regarding electronic minds. Self-

learning electronic minds obtain their information from all possible sources. Access to the stored or retrieved data is not emotionally driven, as is the case with self-learning biological minds. The exchange between electronic brains primarily involves open communication paths, and the flow can be interrupted, but obstacles are not emotional or sentimental in nature. In biological brains, such obstacles can arise and close all communication channels. Furthermore, the basis of all information available to electronic brains was originally provided by biological brains. And that is perhaps the paradox. When Inês asks him for more information, Alberto uses the project his team collaborated with Steven Bird's team as an example. With that project, they aimed to make the steering mechanisms of spacecraft for local and interplanetary travel safer. They quickly concluded that, just as in terrestrial aeronautics, the ultimate safety measure lies in the complete transfer of control to the human pilot. And even then, that pilot could deliberately perform an incorrect action that endangers the craft and its passengers or cargo. A self-learning electronic brain, in a serious emergency, performs actions that, according to all available information, will have the least harmful consequences. A biological brain can, in some cases, handle lateral thinking more creatively. Operations of this nature can be entered into databases, allowing electronic brains to learn to make decisions that at first glance seem illogical. But can you make electronic brains deliberately filter out incorrect information? Is it possible that at some point, an electronic brain's analysis of information could only endanger the ship? Wouldn't it be better to speak of a paradox at that point than a deliberate error?

Inês sees once again raising the philosophical question of whether electronic brains can be considered conscious, and if so, whether they can be considered to start deliberate actions intended to cause harm. An electronic brain might well take a well-considered risk, but isn't that simply because it has information that such a risk has

a greater chance of success than a routine operation, for example, in a crisis situation? In that case, any harmful consequence would be caused by information manipulated by a biological brain, which is part of the data analysed by the electronic brain.

Alberto smiles and says: “so, according to you, there’s no electronic equivalent to the Machiavellian tendencies of biological brains. That’s something to discuss with my sister-in-law. As you may already know, she’s focused more on communication than Catherine, in the context of ignarometric research.”

Sérgio, who later receives a report of this and other conversations between Inês and Alberto, notes with a laugh that his biological brain is capable of creating a scenario in which someone’s love passes from the grandson to the grandfather.

The ensuing pillow fight concludes with a convivial family meal. During the meal, Inês again brings up cultural evolution. Catherine refers back to the four societal utopias she outlined with her sister. According to Catherine, these are no more than four possible directions cultural evolution can take. Alberto, too, sees four open paths, not one specific path from which there is currently deviation. Naturally, human-related cultural evolution is developing faster than general biological evolution. Perhaps we will also see an answer sooner regarding what is and is not viable. For now, we don’t have a cultural evolutionary equivalent as dramatic as the oxygen switch in early biological evolution. Other moments when biological life itself was threatened were more related to external factors. The extinction of the dinosaurs, not to mention the evolution into birds, is not a biological crisis caused by the dinosaurs themselves. Perhaps it is the case for the very recent biological evolution of *Neanderthalis* and *Sapiens* as closely related coexisting species of the genus *Homo* towards the subspecies *Sapiens Sapiens* with embedded Neanderthal genetic heritage. Perhaps it is some kind of biological crisis caused by the species *Sapiens* and *Neanderthalis* themselves. Or not. Perhaps external factors have

influenced the fate of *Neanderthalis* as a species, where genetically speaking mainly *Sapiens* and a tiny bit of *Neanderthalis* continue to exist in the only subspecies *Sapiens Sapiens*.
Culturally it seems that *Sapiens Sapiens* is currently determining one of the four possible paths. For now, there are clear indications of a dislocation toward the right of the ignarometric model. Fear is being cultivated, ignorance is pervasive, populist leaders are making decisions in their own interests. Social organisation consists of abandoning large segments of the population to their fate, whether or not under authoritarian leadership. In megapoleis and districts, many live in closed groups. All of this resembles the evolution toward totalitarian societies at the beginning of a new cycle. Greta notes that the future of the cooperative pluralistic utopia will apparently depend on the genetic embedding of the will to critical thinking in general ignorance.
"So we must launch in the *Hortublic* a call in the style of *go and multiply*," Sérgio remarks.
Everyone laughs, and Inês adds: "You better think carefully about where you will go and multiply, Sérgio Mestre!"

By the end of 2068, the global central governments on the various continents have everything in place to separate those with money from those merely trying to survive. The boundary lies in the middle of Bloomberg's value number 3. According to manipulative sociologists, it's more interesting to place the boundary in the middle of this number than, for example, between numbers 3 and 4. It gives the poorer, more ignorant, the feeling that financial mobility hasn't disappeared. This rhetoric is often heard to give authoritarian and autocratic regimes a certain legitimacy.
Meanwhile, financial transactions are now only electronic. Coins and paper money have completely disappeared. In almost all poleis, identity cards and financial transaction cards are being replaced by an identification chip. Since the beginning of this year, this chip is mandatory for every baby born in a polis during the first day of life.

Since last year, all children and young adults have received the chip free of charge upon simple request. Starting this year, implantation will also become mandatory for all adults once their identity card or electronic payment method expires. Poleis residents over sixty-five will have the option of paying for a new combined card valid for life upon the expiration of either of former cards, or switching to the chip system free of charge. The Central Authorities intend to almost completely link personal identification to the identification chips within the next ten years. Every polis resident, anywhere in the world, is already registered in a database system. This contains all administrative information, complete medical records, health visas, schooling and career details, and a complete financial overview. All services and points of sale have digital readers programmed to obtain the necessary data for the requested service when scanning the personal chip or card.

Since the invention of money, possession of it has determined whether someone is part of the consuming population or merely a survivor. The changing capacity to consume is now the sole measure of social mobility. A person's financial resources determine their level of citizenship in any megalopolis. Among those without, there are two categories. There are the "polis-wanderers" who live on the streets or in the most destitute slums on the outskirts. In these neighbourhoods various religious congregations operate charitable institutions. Wanderers often have a fixed route for collecting leftovers. In the districts for Bloomberg numbers 4 through 7 small public collecting areas are provided. Anyone can leave surplus food there. An automated system transports leftovers to the districts with distribution points. The wanderers then receive them for free or for a nominal fee, depending on their profile entered into the chip.

Quite a few non-owners choose to live communally outside the polis. There, they are completely self-reliant. Small groups subsist on subsistence farming. Manual labour is highly valued, and it has

become customary to provide services to one another. Lone travellers occasionally appear in all groups. They are usually low-incomers who leave the polis on foot and seek out rural areas. Occasionally, non-negligible Bloomberg value 4 or even 5-number holders join groups. These are usually people who feel suffocated in the district where they live. With a health visa that allows them to use collective transportation, they travel to the outskirts of the polis. There, some transfer their electronic balance to the accounts of solidarity institutions. Others convert their balance into goods, often including personal transportation. Using a cargo bike, an electric bicycle, or a scooter with a trailer, they then leave the polis via rarely used back roads in search of some outside community. Local authorities are of course aware of these kinds of disappearances. No one stops these escaping polis residents. Policy administrators would rather be rid of such non-committal individuals. The oversight policy is more focused on those who want to enter a policy than on those who want to leave. The government monitors known back doors for entry, not exit.

The *Hortublic* community is naturally quite worried. The extensive monitoring within the boundaries of any Polis gives everyone a fairly precise picture of how much they spend and on which goods and services. Travellers can be tracked even more easily than before. Payment for internet services provides clear indications of the time someone spends in augmented reality and on the various platforms. In other words, long avatar conversations may be linked to critics, especially because those critics who were already being monitored in other ways. Some internet virtuosos are considering setting up an independent messaging system. Interested universities should develop their own network for this purpose and staff could automatically use it. Satellites are needed for this. Universities must therefore lease parts of existing satellites or deploy them themselves. According to Steven Bird and his younger colleagues, it is technically feasible and surer to have small communication

satellites to be launched clandestinely travel along with the launch of other devices. When Greta listens somewhat incredulously to her mother's old friend's proposals, her father explains that it's not only space pilots who want to build such a clandestine network. There are gradually clandestine activities in various fields joining groups of intellectuals and highly specialised technicians.

Until a fully shielded communications system is available, most members of the *Hortublic* use to the improved augmented reality with new avatars, thanks to the wildly popular online game *The White Whole* in the largest virtual world platform they form a kind of new *Illuminati* They are known as the *Whireless*-group. One of the *White Whole* players of the *Hortublic* created *The White Realm Access* to a new better protected meeting place. *Whireless* sounds innocent enough as a group name.

During this period the number of *Hortublic* members suddenly quickly augments and enters that fantasy-Realm. And the *go and multiply* one's proposed by Sérgio isn't even necessary. Oddly enough, the impetus is a financial measure. Nowadays, almost all contactless payments are made via chip by placing the wrist near an electronic receiving device. Counterfeit payments have become virtually impossible this way, but the two-factor method remains for medium-sized transactions. A fingerprint is then required. Registering the fingerprint of every adult implanted with a chip is part of the system. Young people's fingerprints are punched in as soon as they open a financial account independent of their parents. However, it was announced that iris recognition would also be introduced for financial transactions. Officially, this is necessary to confirm significant high payments. But according to many critics, something else is at stake. Iris identification is a new status symbol that only a limited portion of the population has access to. It is the new gold and platinum profile of the last century. The number of holders would be forever limited to 10% of a policy population. And of course, such iris identification could open the door to other

exclusive benefits. They preview mandatory iris identification for certain surgical procedures, for enrolment in certain highly qualified studies, for exclusive travel— the list can be long.
With their unbridled arrogance, the autocratic elite has this time made the mistake of assuming that ignorance is so widespread that there is no longer any need to fear opposition, Catherine observes. This same elite also seems to believe Knowers will place themselves at their disposal without restriction, because this entails some lesser privileges. It seems like a kind of revival of the Ancien Régime. Yet, researchers and scientists are less willing to imitate the absolute elite than were the philosophers who once formed part of the Court of absolute monarchs. Catherine cites the writings of François de La Mothe Le Vayer for this purpose.

The controversial iris identification system is an example of how the elite continues to promote the ownership and symbolic value of money. Apparently, the goal is to further widen the gap between rich and poor. For a small group to continue enriching themselves, a large portion of the population must continue to become impoverished. Gold and bitcoins are currently the only guarantees for monetary ownership, expressed in numbers on electronic files, and the supply of both objects is limited. Nature determines the amount of gold on earth; human-created systems determine the total supply of bitcoins. Someone can only own more if someone else owns less. The *Bloomcamp* elite is aware of this, and therefore deploys its front men in the central and local governments. These, in turn, use the intelligentsia who claim to be sympathetic to them. But it is precisely among this intelligentsia that a counterculture is flourishing today, giving rise to underground resistance. Some local rulers suspect that certain figures mobilise agitators. But the elite itself is generally reassured: it manipulates the ignorant masses living in the poleis with relative ease, and controls on the border areas are strict to prevent Knowers from entering the poleis unnoticed. In addition to efficient manipulation techniques, there

are viral attacks on a weakening population. Now that many pathogens are increasingly resistant to medication and vaccination, protection is decided by district, favouring the more affluent.

Some local governments are exploiting the geographical location to reinforce the isolation of their area. The Demeester sisters' family and close friends, including Catherine, living in Megaludein have learned that a definitive physical travel ban is imminent between the mainland and the British Isles. From mid-2070, it is said, intelligentsia will only be allowed to travel electronically within the entire archipelago. Furthermore, the general population will be prohibited from physically moving outside their own district. The vast majority of this population no longer possesses the means or the knowledge to connect with each other via avatars in closed or protected areas, such as the *Hortublic* or the *Whireless*-group. The increasingly efficient electronic intelligence also makes these protected areas increasingly difficult to conceal.

According to Inês the *ignarometric framework* is ready for a new update. She speaks to Greta about it, who in turn suggests her mother work on this new update together with Aunt Joana. She believes also this is the right time to obtain an exit visa for Megalissipo. A kind of covert political purge is underway. Anyone with living relatives outside of Megaludein is advised to leave the area with a health visa. This also applies to those who were not born in the British Isles. No one says whether those who leave the area will ever be allowed to re-enter. On the advice of colleagues, the entire *Ignarysis*-staff still living in Megaludein intend to sell everything in early 2069 and settle in Iberia, partly in Megalissipo, partly in Megabarça.

Shortly after the move, Sérgio Mestre and Inês Legendre marry in Megalissipo. They can afford to spend a honeymoon in Megabarça with Gabriel and Bianca, who had returned to their former home in the Montbau district.

While staying with their friends in Megabarça, the young couple

meets a fascinating figure who, according to Inês, almost certainly operates underground. He tells them about the book labyrinth known as the *Cemetery of Forgotten Books*. Today this cemetery is managed by *Senõr Zafonis*. The man is a lover and avid collector of all the books and printed matter that are now almost unread by anyone. The visible part of his business consists of one of the few remaining shops with religious articles in *The Holy Family* -district. A half-hidden door leads to a vast labyrinth of corridors lined with endless bookshelves, which Zafonis tries to maintain order in. The labyrinth, made up of corridors and cellars constructed by the resistance during the last century, stretches for several kilometers and connects entrances, usually in ordinary residential buildings or in abandoned commercial centers converted into communal living spaces. Afterwards Gabriel and Bianca speaks with awe of Zafonis. He has resolved to preserve as much knowledge and literature as possible. In doing so, he has built a large clandestine organisation of volunteers. Much of somewhat romanticised stories circulate in the *Hortublic* leaving many unsure whether it's a real organisation. Zafonis leaves them in doubt. Surprised, Inês and Sérgio learn that Gabriel and Bianca have been members for several years. They are particularly enthusiastic because the group regularly succeeds in attracting young, ignorant people who, in exchange for maintenance work in the corridors, receive free education and training, gradually specialising by looking after a specific section of the labyrinth, where the works of their interest are kept.

Inês, in particular, is quite impressed. The social district system has replaced the petty-nationalist ideology with a petty-communal ideology. In many places, the oligarchy is undermining national borders to glorify polis and district borders, which supposedly mean safety and health for the population. This ideology is gradually gaining the upper hand in parts of the planet where wealthy people live. With the widespread end of face-to-face education and schools where discussion is possible, the petty communal ideology is further

encouraged. Libraries are among the most important meeting and dialogue spaces at the moment. Local authorities keep a close eye on these spaces. Since they are usually located in districts where existing universities are still active, they try to make access more difficult for those who do not live in the intellectual districts. That is why Inês finds the labyrinth of the *Cemetery of Forgotten Books* and its underlying organisation such an interesting initiative. Paradoxically, it cannot be written about openly. In *Ignarysis* for example, an ignarometric analysis of the phenomenon would be very interesting. It would demonstrate that the cooperative pluralism utopia has not disappeared. Unfortunately, it would also draw too much attention to the initiative among undesirable readers of *Ignarysis*. Maybe, she says to Sérgio, they should have to start a *Clandisnarysis*. Gabriel laughs. He believes there's no need for a new magazine to pass this kind of information on underground. It's already happening, like now, with them, thanks to personal contact, but also with others, whenever and wherever well-protected avatar meetings still take place.
Once back in Megalissipo, Inês receives confirmation of what Gabriel had said to her with a laugh. Both young people talk with Greta and her uncle Alexandre N'Kondo about their experiences in Megabarça. Alexandre then tells them that Zafonis staff had been approaching the Paulo Demeester Library House for several years now. After a series of exploratory conversations, they started a Charter Group with the aim of establishing a similar network in Megalissipo of volunteers interested in literature and stored knowledge. Greta adds that similar networks are also being developed in other megapoleis. No one writes about it openly, but the small working groups of researchers, including the ignarometricians, are very effective channels for sharing experiences.

The Library House continues to perform short plays, usually by Alexandre. The programming of chamber concerts by composers

from the last two centuries has been ongoing for years. Francisco carefully selects the pieces. He has made it a habit to introduce the selected works with a short prelude of his own, in which he introduces the work performed afterward. Joana is always delighted to see the great interest in the chamber concerts. Additional days are often necessary to give everyone the opportunity to enjoy the erudite contemporary music. Her deafness prevents her from experiencing the full richness of the pieces herself, but even today, Daniel and Francisco continue to support her in gaining a better understanding of the music. Alexandre helps out. He succeeds in recreating a performance with written words. Inês sees this dual approach—to evoke an atmosphere, to paint an image, to tell a story—as wonderful examples of communication. Meanwhile, she also knows Sérgio's family well. Together with Manuel and Alexandra, who both inherited their love for the written word from their parents, she writes children's and youth stories.

Twenty years ago, Greta and Alexandre established a fund for the Paulo Demeester Library. Originally, this fund consisted of the added value generated by the publication of works by Alexandre and Manuela and the proceeds from donations invested through Greta and Joana's learning communities. Today, the initiative has grown into a fully funded organisation *Ignarysis*-readers are familiar with. In addition to the publication of processed documents from Paulo Demeester's library, other free electronic publications soon followed on different platforms. For some time now, the fund has been publishing printed versions of some works. These are sold at cost price in the Library House but can also be obtained by mail after ordering, although this is no longer so easy due to the district policy. In general, scholarly works are only available electronically. A *smartphone* is still a highly sought-after article, even among the poorer urban population. Among the Ignorants, that doesn't necessarily make it more easy to consult these works. The declining reading capacity of many Ignorants makes reading, especially

electronic works, a nearly impossible task. In collaboration with several private initiators who are part of the *Zafonis* network, the Mestre and N'Kondo families are launching a new series of spoken and dramatised books. These will receive a *Zafonis*-label to distinguish them from the many docudramas on the populist network channels.

Greta and Alexandre are now proposing, together with the Paulo Demeester Library House Fund, to record partially staged retellings of children's stories published by the Library. They are looking to involve more interested parties in this initiative.

Steven Bird consults on writing children's stories about space exploration. One story is about life on a moon base, another about the first viable settlement on Mars. Thanks to his network of space pilots, he has also gathered sufficient information about how the autocratic oligarchs use Ganymede and Europa to banish the most difficult critics. He has maintained regular contact with the James Hogan Foundation since the 2050s, which holds the complete scientific work of Victor Hunt and Chris Danchecker. Today, no one knows exactly where the two researchers actually live. According to some, they never left Ganymede; according to others, they returned to Earth via the moon base and live in a rural community. Greta and Alexandre suspect that Steven knows more he's willing to share. There appears to be some kind of agreement among the friends and admirers of both scientists to deliberately remain vague. This would protect them from prosecution or even abduction. They may have actually had contact with an extraterrestrial intelligence. It is unclear whether this was biological or electronic intelligence. Their spiritual father spoke quite openly about those encounters. At that time, the rise of the Era of the Learner and the evolution of democracy toward cooperative pluralism seemed unstoppable. Today, everything is different. *Bloomcamp* residents are very interested in what both men might know about virtual travel as a far-reaching extension of the use of avatars. They are also said to

have information about travel techniques that are far ahead of magnetic trains, ion, and photon propulsion. These are the technological feats on Earth today. All of this is covered in a youth adventure story recommended for all those who are not completely Ignorant and are in Charter Groups.

In the summer of 2070, Greta and her cousins are sitting with their children in the garden of the Paulo Demeester Library. Sérgio and Inês divide their attention between the ongoing conversation among the adults and their now almost six-month-old twins, who have just woken up on a blanket in the shade. The babies make all sorts of sounds as they wriggle their arms and legs to roll toward each other.

“We’re really happy that you decided to leave Megaludein together last year and come live here,” Alexandre begins. “I’m especially happy for Mom and Aunt Catherine that they’re living near each other again.”

“I think we can expect a new version of the ignarometric framework soon now,” Manuela notes. “Joana mentioned something about this. Apparently, their enthusiastic conversations are continuing well into the night.”

“Yes,” agrees Francisco’s companion, Amy Matisse. “I recently heard Daniel talking about it to Alberto. He said it’s like they’re back in the 2020s, when the sisters were working on the first published version of the frame.”

“Dad told me something else,” says Greta. “The universities of Megabarça and Megabelgium contacted him a while ago to say that both institutions are considering an *Honoris Causa* to be granted to Mom and Aunt Joana. The initiator is Abigail Blum, remember Sérgio?”

Sérgio looks up in surprise. “Abigail, who we met when London still existed and we could travel quite easily? Did she leave Megaludein too?”

She told Dad that a few years before we moved here, she herself

had returned to Megabelgium. She was offered the opportunity to put together her own team at the *Institute for Social Endemic Diseases*. Of course, she was sometimes a bit vague in her explanation, but Dad clearly understood that her team works in two directions. There is the official research into *Social Endemic Diseases* for *Bloomcamp*. This mainly concerns adjusting security measures around the condominiums against possible attacks by poorly manipulated ignorant individuals. But the team does a lot of unofficial work in the poorer districts. There they try to involve ignorant individuals in learning communities endorsing the *Charter of the Learner*."

Inês smiles a little sadly. "It's come a long way. These days, we only feel safe when we remain vague in long-distance conversations. Gradually, we're developing a form of ambiguous communication again for our own safety."

"Again?" asks Alexandra.

"Yes, there are moments in history marked by deliberately ambiguous communication. Here in what is now Iberia, the last time this happened on a large scale is quite recent, from the beginning of the last century until about a hundred years ago. The Iberian countries were then known as Portugal and Spain, and each was governed by a dictatorial regime."

"Francisco says: "Grandpa Paulo used to talk about it sometimes, remember? If I remember correctly, Grandma Maria, whom I never knew, lived under that regime as a child."

Sérgio then notes: "And a hundred years later, after what seemed like an improvement toward democracy, we're apparently back to square one. Will we ever say of our daughters that they were born under a dictatorship?"

Manuela looks at him: "You seem to mean it. And it's strange. I wanted to say no, in surprise at first, but maybe you're right. What kind of society is this that your daughters and my grandchildren are entering? No one talks about political prisoners, but all in all…

almost the entire continent — and apparently on other continents as well — the vast majority of the population lives in districts. Schools and public gathering places remain closed, officially for virus control. The Bloomberg leadership is entrenched in its impregnable *Bloomcamp* Condominiums. Hardly anyone travels anymore. We all know how difficult it is to counter ignorance and populist, often aggressive manipulation… yes, perhaps we could even speak of a new dictatorship."

Greta then replies: "But we did convert this house. It's still a publicly accessible documentation center. And we were able to link a significant publishing fund to it, if I may say so myself."

Alexandre looks at his cousin: "We do. But let's be realistic. The audience physically present here consists mainly of people from our own district. Well, we have a lot of visitors thanks to the augmented reality. Our publishing house might be useful for learning communities. And since we joined the *Zafonis* network, our contributions may be easier to find. But there's no getting around it. We sense a growing tendency to do away with book culture. Not only do the governing elites cast suspicion on serious research, but also the manipulated populations of the megapoleis. We don't really know what happens in rural areas."

"My dear pessimistic brother may have a point here," says Francisco. "You can't miss it. The lobbies of the financial powers are successfully promoting their counter-reformation against the universal sharing of all knowledge and science."

Alexandre continues: "They have increasing control over their subject leaders. These leaders, in turn, use a media that depends entirely on private funding. Carefully selected and attentive opinion leaders skilfully manipulate the population with intimidation and mystification.

The richest are of course aware that their hegemony rests on the debt burden and impoverishment of the rest of the population."

"Yes, buddy," says Greta, "as much as I'd like it to be different,

that's the reality today. Many analysts, including Mom and your mother, foresaw this crushing downsizing of the middle class. The rich are becoming very rich, and the poor are getting poorer. And, Manuela, the policy of housing the poorer population in certain parts of the large poleis is linked to the constant fear of uprisings among the most privileged. This clearly leads to ghettos and concentration camps, so to speak. On every continent, adjacent agglomerations have been transformed into megapoleis. In some of these poleis, the latent aggression is turning into a constant urban guerrilla war. Today, news reports even try to conceal what's happening elsewhere. Just look at how the Erebúm Central Government controls official information and what circulates on communication platforms across the entire area between the former Vinland area of New York and Boston, known today as Megapple. The *Hortublic* records unprecedented forms of aggression throughout that area."

Sérgio responds: "It's almost a reversal in reporting. Until a few decades ago, reports of urban violence were often exaggerated to popularise oppressive measures. Now that these measures are effectively in place, urban violence is being eradicated from the collective memory to limit the spread of contagion from one megalopolis to another. A good topic for the *Institute for Social Endemic Diseases*."

Then he points to the babies: "Look, Joana has turned around and is looking at Fernanda."

"Oh," says Inês fondly. "They're really looking at each other, working on their sisterhood!"

When the babies make crowing sounds together at the same time, the whole group laughs.

Then Greta asks: "Any news from Paulo, Amy? How's Alberta doing?"

She's a really nice girl. She's already five! Francisco and I would of course prefer to have Paulo and Pedro living here too, but oh well.

We certainly understand why they settled in Megandalusalgarb as marine researchers. Since they got married, Alberta is legally their daughter. They do keep in regular contact with Alberta's biological mother, who has two children of her own with her husband. They celebrate all their birthdays together. Everyone says Alberta has real N'Kondo traits."

"I didn't follow everything very closely at the time. I had my hands full with another young couple in love…"

Sérgio gives her a playful push and Inês asks: "Were we that difficult?"

Greta just raises one eyebrow and continues: "…but from what I hear, Paulo and Pedro were lucky in finding that biological mother!"

"Yes," confirms Amy. "She's a colleague of Paulo's, and they've always gotten along really well. When Paulo once told her that he and Pedro wanted a child, but that they preferred not to adopt and that they felt it was important for their child to connect her biological background with her family circumstances as naturally as possible, the deal was almost immediately sealed. The two couples had a long, in-depth conversation. As a result, Paulo's colleague, after artificial insemination, became a biological mother for his child. Pedro then legally adopted her. And as far as I can tell, both families have a very close bond. Not so long ago, Alberta told me that she has two dads, but that she came from her dad's best friend's womb. And she told me that very proudly and happily."

"And why the name Alberta?" asks Greta.

"The explanation is a bit unclear," laughs Amy. "Sometimes they talk about Alberta Mayne, an actress and social activist from our parents' generation. But then again, they claim they chose the name because it's popular among Black and mestizo population and therefore a kind of reminder of their N'Kondo roots. Personally, I think they just liked the name."

Sérgio looks at Inês and then glances at his mother. "Choosing

names isn't easy. You partly define a person with them. When our twins were born, we agreed that one of the girls would be Joana. Mom talks about her aunt Joana so often that the name came naturally to us."

"And Fernanda?" asks Amy.

Inês lays her head on Sérgio's shoulder and says: "The sweet boy had such an argument I found it hard to say no. He told me he was thinking of Fernand Oury, one of the founders of the *Institutional Pedagogy*. I immediately asked him what that had to do with us and our daughter. And then he said: "It came to mind because our parents were talking about a century of institutional pedagogy that night in what was then still called Barcelona, when we were listening to music together on your parents' roof terrace and I kind of fell in love with you. Back then, I envisioned a future together, and I thought Fernand would be a fitting name. And now that we have twins, I think it would be lovely to name one of the girls after my great-aunt, but why not call the other Fernanda? A kind of alliance between ignarometric sociology and cooperative learning communities. Don't you think that's a good idea?" And yes…" Inês bursts out laughing. "What could I possibly say to that?"

Everyone is laughing. Alexandre then remarks: "If I may elaborate on your vision of the future, Sérgio, activists can develop here if this alliance continues to grow. The trend of closing school buildings continues in almost all Megapoleis. And in Europe (Erebúm), the Central Government has once again recommended limiting the compulsory instruction package for children through distance learning. Reading, functional writing, and arithmetic. No geography or history. End compulsory instruction at the age of 12, after which there will only be vocational training for those activities that require human labor. It's another step towards an even more ignorant population. Intellectuals will be left to their own devices to further educate their children. Talk about caste formation! It's not difficult to predict that higher education will only serve an Inner

Circle. And perhaps those who hold the hidden power will regain complete control over science. Unfortunately, the history of the last century has provided ample examples of how those in power use scientists for their own interests, thereby marginalising anyone who raises critical objections. II fear that your twins will be living in hiding somewhere by the end of this century, if they take your critical alliance seriously, like many other members of their and Alberta's generation."

The libraries resistance(2071-2082)

In September 2071, Joana and Catherine Demeester receive honorary doctorates from the universities of Megabelgium and Megabarça at the beginning of the academic year. The ceremony takes place in private and remotely. Both universities have deployed their best critical computer science experts to shield the gathering from any form of spyware. They opted for almost never-used access points and very specific passwords that could only be used once. These were personally presented to the guests months in advance. The various underground movements played a significant role in this. As a side effect, they were all now interconnected. This global network, encompassing all local *Zafonis*-networks is known today to all insiders as *GNet-Z*.

The whole *Ignarysis*-community has registered its avatars for the ceremony. Of course, all Charter Groups that are part of the *Zafonis*-network of Megalissipo also attend. Abigail Blum, Catherine and Joana appear under their own identities in the *Hortublic*. Both Abigail and Joana are sad Ester Langlauf is no longer be among us to experience the moment. She passed away in May. Catherine and Alberto are also very sad Steven Bird is no longer with us. Catherine and Joana did ask Abigail to briefly mention Ester and Steven during her eulogy. Abigail explains how Ester introduced her to the work of the Demeester sisters as a young researcher and how she also introduced her to the *Charter of the Learner*. About Steven she tells how he, with his usual creativity, came up with the word *Bloomcampers* used by everyone today to identify wealthy residents of *Bloomcamp* condominiums. She then addresses all the activists who, despite increasingly autocratic and arrogant governments, continue to make ardent efforts to involve Ignorants and their children in mind-expanding learning communities in all megapoleis. She also mentions the important role of Private Libraries. They

replace the former schools. They are the foundation for any dialogue-based educational project.

Regarding Steven, she also remembers how he has dedicated himself in recent years to realising one of the dreams of the networks that are now coalescing into *GNet-Z*. He helped establish a closed and protected satellite network, which also includes all rural communities where intellectuals migrate. Abigail says that if the information she has, is correct this network will become a reality within the next few years.

During the speech of thanks, Catherine speaks about the success of *Ignarysis*. The journal continues to be published despite repeated attempts to shut it down, and continues to publish social analyses. She admits that the success is, of course, relative, given that fewer and fewer people are able to read scientific articles. Nevertheless, she hopes it can continue to serve as an eye-opener for all colleagues attracted by the Bloomberg dominators. Joana emphasises the enormous amount of information that circulates in the *Ignarysis*-community. She describes the work of one of the *Zafonis* Learning communities that used the information and worked for years on a new update of the ignarometric framework. They then officially present that updated version, *matrix 95/121*, (*see appendix*).

After the ceremony, Greta and Alexandre begin preparing the 2072 calendar at the Paulo Demeester Library House. Both are concerned about the messages reaching them, both officially, at the university, and through the *GNet-Z*. Local governments are finding it increasingly difficult to control organised groups of Ignorants from the poor districts. The protests are increasingly directed against the autocratic and arrogant local governments themselves. But what they are particularly concerned about is that these protests are not based on critical analysis, for example, resulting from participation in a learning community. They are often spontaneous, uncritical revolts against ‘the enemy’ that plunge

people into poverty. And in this, intellectuals and administrators are tarred with the same brush. The riots begin spontaneously and are often very violent. Nowadays, deaths are not uncommon in most megapoleis. The central and local governments fear a generalisation of what is happening in Megapple. There is constant work to reorganise large agglomerations. Borders are being reinforced, and all movement between districts is also being policed. Those with nothing to lose no longer worry about a potential virus threat that might exist in the nearby district. These constant reorganisations are related to the growing fear of the *Bloomcampers* who now own 95% of the world's total wealth. This group is gradually becoming aware that they themselves have created an explosive situation that is difficult to sustain.

At such times, the Central Governments also turn to the *Institute for Social-Endemic Diseases*, and suddenly ignarorometric analysis is a valid tool. According to Catherine and Joana however arrogant leaders find it quite interesting to score high in arrogance and low in ignorance. They are not bothered by the labels used for the ideal types. Gradually, *Ignarysis* issues are being conducted to analyse specific communities or districts and propose conclusions. Sociologists and economists then jointly develop various scenarios. Joana and Catherine receive numerous invitations to participate, giving them the opportunity to demonstrate the broad outlines. Interest in the nationalist utopia gradually shifts to interest in totalitarian utopia, while the pluralistic, or rather, empathetic utopia generally fades from view. A major cause is the disappearance of group schooling, where students share a classroom. Schooling has long since reverted to purely instructional programs. Even so, group schooling, where students are physically present, is a mitigating factor. Distance learning has resulted in a kind of culture rift. The absence of face-to-face social contact significantly reduces the exchange of neighbourhood chitchat, small talk, and gossip, aspects that many anthropologists and

anthropogogues consider fundamental for developing healthy relationships between groups and between individuals.

Moreover, in recent decades, instructional programs have become more indoctrinating than coercive, which increases the tendency among a large segment of the population to reluctantly accept totalitarian solutions. This often occurs out of fear.

According to the sisters Demeester, from the French Revolution to the present day, one can see an evolution in the ideal types of the framework, with the growing number of arrogant ignorant people who blindly follow the arrogant non-ignorant ones. As a result, these ignorant people themselves become the oppressors of the non-arrogant ignorant people. They continue to do so until they themselves experience being manipulated by the arrogant non-ignorant ones. This gaining of consciousness is gradual, as totalitarian regimes increasingly develop. Sometimes the trigger is the loss of a minor privilege, such as not being able to go to another district for entertainment. And this is primarily the result of the concentration of wealth and consumerism among the Bloomberg 8+ value group. They increasingly shield their opulent lifestyle from the rest of the population. Meanwhile, these top groups flaunt it among themselves. The ignarometric analysis reveals lines of decline. The end of a democratic cycle leads more quickly to totalitarianism than to pluralistic cosmopolitanism. Rising arrogance is causing democratic decline and fuelling aggressive self-destruction. Growing ignorance among the non-arrogant further reinforces this decline toward self-destruction, which many simply accept. The decline toward fascist situations is the result of the tension between a small group of arrogant non-ignorant ideal-types and a vast group of ignorant non-arrogant ideal-types. Depending on the group of non-arrogant, non-ignorant critical thinkers - often somewhat scornfully called the *Knowers* - diminishes, and the group of arrogant ignorant petty rulers increases. Pluralism degenerates into tolerance and tolerance into intolerance.

At the time of their honorary doctorates, the Demeester sisters sketched a picture of world society at the end of the twentieth century. At that time, one could still speak of a large middle group of democratic societies in their early or late stages, with a relatively small group of fascist societies at the top left of the frame. Furthermore, the left, under intellectual utopian organisational forms, was viewed with suspicion by those in power. A fairly large number of totalitarian states in their developmental stages occupied the right half of the frame. After thoroughly reviewing everything that had been published in *Ignarysis* in the course of nearly fifty years Sérgio will sketch a somewhat optimistic regeneration of democracies and self-governing local communities for the twenty-first century (hectoyear 120).

Only much later would Emmy Lehrman demonstrate how that hectoyear brought humanity straight into what we now call *tilting century* and made us dive with the near-fatal outcome of human societies in the first half of Hectoyear 121. Catherine and Liberty Auctor discuss this extensively in the penultimate part of our saga.

But let us return to the second half of the twenty-first century. The analysis requested by the Central Government regarding the growing social unrest, despite all the indoctrinating and coercive measures, yields a number of very different recommendations. Broadly speaking, the analysts fall into three specific lines of thought.

The group most valued by the Central Governments argues that the concentration of wealth is essential to maintain credit-based consumerism. They argue that this also benefits the poor globally. However, this requires a large portion of the poor population to remain creditworthy, and central financial institutions are currently unwilling to support this. Therefore, the financial philanthropic work of the personal foundations of *Bloomcampers* with values 9 to 11 have to receive more attention. An active policy is needed to financially support the poor and to make this public. This makes

restless ignorant people believe they are still participating in the economic game. Instead of viewing the absolute financial elite as an enemy, they will once again see them as essential for their own betterment. Moreover, the aggression of their followers must be directed at all costs against those specific critical thinkers who question wealth and possessions.

The recommendations of a second group of analysts are well-received by local governments of better-organised megapoleis in the Anahuac and Alkebulan continents. These are urbanisations of 3 to 15 million inhabitants in the form of mature democracies. The analysts assume that the concentration of wealth in the hands of a small group of individuals living in luxurious condominiums is a disaster for the entire planet. They do not question the market economy but argue that, for this economic form to work, local governments must urge the central continental governments to promote the overall development of regionals *Guaranteed Basic Incomes*. The group's economists are adherents of the Bregman School, which bases its economic framework on the ideas of Rutger Bregman. These ideas essentially suggest that if everyone has access to a basic income, everyone will have more time to work on their own development, and that there will therefore be less aggressive towards the overall wealthiest segment of the population. The income gap will remain, the economists argue, to maintain the illusion of mobility. But the interested local governments receive little support to put these kinds of proposals into practice. Even the *Bloomcampers* with values 11 and 10 who invest heavily in personal foundations, see this proposal as a return to a wider distribution of global wealth. They want to avoid that. A universally guaranteed income would cost more than what they currently spend on donations and would ultimately narrow the gap between rich and poor. Moreover, there is a significant risk that people working on their own development will join the ranks of critical thinkers, something that must be countered at all times.

Then there's a third group of analysts. They radically argue that money is the problem. Money breeds a desire for possession and domination. According to this group, only a more pluralistic world can be a less aggressive one. Therefore, people shouldn't be told they can collect abstract numbers that are supposedly backed by gold or bitcoins. That hasn't been the case for a long time. Yet, people are still encouraged to fixate on this. But the *Bloomcampers* will never allow others to amass large numbers. According to these analysts, money always leaves the side effect of power relations untouched, which inevitably means oppressors and oppressed people. Currently it's safe to say that a large part of the poor population has descended back to the status of serfs. Bregman proposals are the only way to break the impasse, but only if they ultimately lead to a moneyless society in which people learn to use goods and products instead of wanting to own them. This starts with abolishing all forms of personal vehicle ownership, restoring universal education, and restoring free medical care. Although they present their proposals in a somewhat moderated manner, these analysts immediately belong to a very suspect and distrustful group for local and central governments. The *Ignarysis* group is feeling increasing pressure to provide personal information about analysts labeled subversive. For now, it's easy to demonstrate that these analysts aren't inciting violence or other aggressive behaviour but rather assuming that the aggression stems from the attitude those in power are taking toward the growing ignorance even among members of local governments.

Fernanda and Joana are two years old when Inês finished her studies. After Joana retires, she begins working full-time with Greta. Their interest remain to be information and communication. Despite all the warnings about the risk of increasing aggression due to individual, remote instruction, the Local Government of Megalissipo sees no reason to continue supporting face-to-face group schooling. All secondary schools in the area are closed. This

increases the pressure on those who organize Charter Groups for their own children and for those of dissatisfied, uneducated individuals. The latter group consists primarily of children of uneducated individuals who regularly provide services or do odd jobs in the districts near the university and the two other remaining colleges. In more remote districts, the desire to connect with such learning communities is less. The organised groups of uneducated individuals are much easier manipulated and indoctrinated. They generally behave more aggressively towards knowledgeable individuals.

But those dedicated to information and communication don't give up. Inês and Greta encourage the use of children's and young adult literature. The Paulo Demeester Library's collection collects as many works as possible that appeared in print throughout the first half of the 20th century. They are difficult to find these days. Libraries that still have children's books are lending them out less and less. There are groups of ignorants who systematically borrow such books and don't return them. Like others, the collection invests in the publication of electronic versions of children's books and youth encyclopaedias, which can then be downloaded free of charge to any reader, smartphone, or tablet.

Inês and Greta are part of the international community promoting children's literature, which recently established the criteria for children's and young adult books to obtain the *Zafonis*-label. All books with that label are then linked to the *Charter of the Learner*. Charter Groups working with children thus have a quick and easy overview of books that adhere to the Charter's basic principles. Attention is paid to ecological, cross-species perspectives. In fictional literature, cooperation and pluralistic decision-making are important elements. After reading such books, children, accompanied by an adult, enjoy imitating what they read. Among books that elaborate on scientific discoveries, Greta and Inês highlight those in which critical thinking, hypothesis formation, and

subsequent experimentation are clearly evident. Typically, such works include several suggestions for supporting children's learning. Officially, they rely on the use of instructional and indoctrination programs approved by the Local Governments.

Inês uses Joana and Catherine's ignarometric framework to demonstrate how those in power themselves use disinformation and conspiracy theories to impose their will.
Sérgio is very interested in this aspect of Inês' work and that of his mother. In some of his contributions for *Ignarysis* he articulates the ignarometric framework with institutional anthropogogy. In doing so, he attempts to demonstrate why the emphasis should remain on an accessible educational system that supports learners, especially children. In the various Erebúm, Waçúm, and South Vineland megapoleis of today, this educational system operates only underground, clandestinely, through Charter Groups.

By 2075, the trend is clear to all analysts. Most megapoleis follow the recommendations of the classical economics school and some of the more moderate Bregman school to control the aggressive behaviour of the population in the poor districts. Typically, governance is in the hands of political oligarchies that do everything they can to meet the demands of the *Bloomcampers*. Their main mission remains to keep the middle class ignorant to prevent more people from rising to the ranks of property owners. Compulsory basic schooling no longer exists. Officially recognised and supervised institutions organize distance learning. Strictly spoken any form of learning community is thus illegal.

Small, self-reliant communities live within the boundaries of their own district. The arrogant accusations levelled at those living outside their own Megapolis, or even just outside their own district, channel the rapidly growing ignorant arrogance. The resulting rapidly spreading intolerance must in turn be channeled. Social networks operate only locally. Influencers receive centrally

controlled disinformation but can only influence local followers. Digital platforms with general knowledge are systematically shut down for security reasons. The third of the world's population that did not have access to the global network in 2070 will never have it. Those who do have individual connections see transmission speeds decline rapidly. Those who are not part of the elite are no longer able to establish connections between megapoleis. In addition to the *Bloomcamp*-Condominiums, districts only provide local or general cable and satellite connections for universities and administrative districts. Therefore, even the still-privileged group of lecturers and students at universities of applied sciences can only use controlled digital platforms via centrally monitored connections. However, personal contacts that do not take place via a digital platform are difficult to monitor. Therefore, some local governments are increasingly closing university buildings indefinitely.

Some space pilots from the *GNet-Z* have finally, and just in time, succeeded in clandestinely placing and starting to operate three small satellites in geostationary orbits in the electronic 'shadow' of satellites known to Central Governments. This is according to the libraries and learning communities that are part of the *GNet-Z* to migrate a number of communication channels through the controlled lines of universities. However, everyone who is part of the *GNet-Z* and also has access to official digital networks, is recommended to continue using them. A sudden complete disappearance from these networks would arouse too much suspicion. Therefore, many scientists and learning communities maintain duplicate contacts. *GNet-Z* satellites reestablish secure communication with rural areas. However, this is no longer possible with all communities. Some groups have, to a certain extent, secluded themselves in their ignorance and subsist primarily on bartering among themselves. Other communities have adopted a mystical-religious approach, usually based on conspiracy theories.

Those who propagate these theories attribute all the evils of the world to those who yearn for science and knowledge. Furthermore, there are also more classical religious communities that have consciously left the megapoleis. They are generally not hostile to intellectuals and critical thinkers. They simply let casual visitors know that they are not interested in networking or broader cooperation, but simply seek peace and reflection as a community. They lead a simple life based on their own local agriculture and the manufacture of simple tools. None of these communities experience any difficulties from the central governments. For local governments, only individuals who want to enter a policy represent a potential threat. All individuals who have not been implanted with a chip or have had it removed simply do not exist.

There are rural communities with critical young people who do not want their children implanted with such a chip at birth. Older adults also sometimes seek out such a community when they feel the pressure to be implanted. Such communities, as a group, possess sufficient knowledge to adapt the large amount of electronic equipment left behind in villages and small towns for communication with *GNet-Z*. A wave of excitement ripples through the entire network when late 2075 contact is reestablished with the rural community where the Hunt family has found refuge. According to incoming reports, the group has established a relatively stable existence on the peaks of a small archipelago high enough to escape the general rise in sea level. The Hunt family and the descendants of Chris Danchecker have managed to establish a highly effective electronic shield above and around the entire zone. This was necessary to maintain contact with their non-human partners. Doubts have been cast over these contacts since they were first reported. However, the space exploration team of which Hunt and Danchecker were a part did indeed find traces of a civilization on Ganymede. They were subsequently able to contact elements of it by exploiting disruptions in the space-time continuum. This non-

Earth intelligence beings are therefore sometimes called Ganymedes, although they are not from Ganymede at all, and the traces point to prehistoric Earth times. That's the main reason to doubt the authenticity of those reports. Incidentally, that doubt is deliberately reinforced by the space explorers themselves who made first contact. But space pilots do talk about it sometimes, and both Alexandre and Greta remember how Steven initially denied the rumours among friends and later remained very secretive about them. All of this gave the authoritarian Central Governments sufficient material to send counter-information to the world and portray the stories circulating as completely false. Meanwhile, the *Bloomcampers* are interested in technology that could offer advantages to the elite. Today, the members of *GNet-Z* are well aware of the communication established at the time with that alien civilization. According to the Hunt family, it continues. Yet, no one knows exactly how they manage to bridge space and time. It remains an open question whether these interlocutors live in our present, our past, or our future. Some researchers believe the question is meaningless because it relates to our local perception of time, which does not correspond to the fundamental laws of nature, in which time may be a meaningless concept.

Years pass. The twins Joana and Fernanda have celebrated their ninth birthday. Their younger brothers are five and almost four. Sérgio and Inês were given the nickname *the fertile couple* by the family. It's quite unusual these days in intellectual circles to see more than two children per couple, especially with relatively young parents. But Sérgio and Inês quite enjoy having children at a young age. Now in their thirties, their lively family consists of six members. The children spend much of their time at the Library House, where they integrate cooperative learning groups. Sérgio has managed to get other parents interested in this. Together, they ensure that their children not only complete basic instruction but also develop social skills in these learning groups. They develop

projects with the children that utilise the information from the Library House. Science, literature, and mathematics occupy a central place. According to Inês, this is the only possible solution now that general education no longer exists, yet a relatively small community of scientists and intellectuals is still being called upon worldwide for all sorts of projects. The governing oligarchies still cultivate the same love-hate relationship with that community of Knowers. *Bloomcampers* have personal funds and spend them on research projects that perpetuate power and wealth. Many grants are available for theoretical mathematics and astronomy. The Muscle Fund and the Brandad Fund have a clear preference for anything related to space engineering.

Since Joana became a widow, she often visits Catherine. Two years earlier, she also became single after Alberto's death. Despite her 89 years, Joana is still active in the Library House, where she enjoys observing her almost fourteen-year-old great-granddaughter, Alberta. Five years ago, the marine research in Megandalusalgarb ceased. Fortunately, Paulo, Pedro, and Alberta were allowed to return to Megalissipo. As a marine biologist, Paulo developed his talent for drawing. He is an illustrator for both scientific digital publications and children's stories. But Alberta apparently inherited her grandfather Francisco's talent. She plays several instruments and knows many of her grandfather's works by heart. Since returning to Megalissipo, she has been studying music intensively, and her grandfather has been a patient teacher.

Joana also often visits Greta, who is active in the cooperative learning group the twins are currently part of. Greta enjoys inventing stories with the children, which they then read aloud to other groups. Alexandre, Francisco, Sérgio, and Inês volunteer their knowledge to these learning groups. They are becoming increasingly comfortable in clandestine and semi-clandestine initiatives based on the pluralistic exchange of ideas. Alexandre and

Francisco vividly remember their first years at one of the schools of *A Voz do Operário,* back when schools still existed. The association is still active in three Megalissipo districts and is part of a local group of private libraries that support charter groups. Not long ago, Greta and Alexandre had a long conversation with the current board members of the association. That was when Francisco was able to give a few concerts with his chamber orchestra during one of the permitted trips within Megalissipo. In the digital section of the library they even found some copies of projects Alexandre and Francisco had worked on as children. By the end of the conversation, it was clear to everyone that all presents are involved in *GNet-Z*.

Thanks to this network's fully secured satellite connections, Sérgio and Inês trace other branches of the family. They meet with the children of Sebastiaan and Alan Hogan, whose grandmother was their grandfather's sister. The former city of Oostende no longer exists. The area is part of the Westkust district in present-day Megabelgium. The Hogans have taken over a historic pub that once hosted jazz concerts. They still offer a limited program for Charter Group participants. They organize an annual series of digital conferences with friends from the Hogeschool Zuid district, which encompasses the former city of Ghent, and with researchers living in the *Brussel-Local* district. The conferences are organised by the *Institute for Social Endemic Diseases*. Abigail Blum facilitated the renewed contact.

G*Net-Z*-members of the largest megapoleis are increasingly speaking about the growing intolerance of a certain group of Ignorants towards meeting places maintained by non-arrogant Knowers. They are not part of any learning group that endorses the *Charter of the Learner*. Moreover, there are clear indications that local and central governments are capitalising on this intolerance. According to these governments, science should only be conducted in centrally controlled universities and be available to *Bloomcamp*. The local

authorities are otherwise aware of the meeting places of Charter Groups and suspect the existence of the underground network, but cannot really get a handle on it. The general policy is to keep the ignorants out of these places through deterrence. In megapoleis where a form of guaranteed income exists, the respective local authorities spread false information that the intellectuals want to see this income abolished. The population is also constantly warned that these kinds of places are frequented by university graduates who therefore travel quite frequently to other districts. Libraries and learning groups are therefore the ideal place to contract any new disease, it is said. According to counter-information from some official services, there are even supposedly rooms where a new disease is deliberately spread, to allow researchers to test all kinds of medicines and vaccines on ordinary people. Just like others do, Greta and Alexandre decide on a more clandestine meeting place. Officially, the Library House is now a rather innocuous museum. Visitors are admitted to the Charter Groups only after thorough investigation. This is necessary, primarily to protect the family's children. They belong to the generation of pluralistic intellectuals of the *Third Line of Thought* and advocate for the complete abolition of the money-based market economy. And it is precisely this group that is clearly the most targeted by the authorities. Along with a large part of the *Ignarysis*-staff they hide their underground activities. The current administrators of the *Cemetery of Forgotten Books* still recommend using official channels. The Paulo Demeester Library community does this to maintain its credibility as an advisor to local authorities. Maintaining this advisory allows all community members to access the RESULT network, anagram for **RES**tricted **Ul**trafast **T**ransport. This way, as members of *GNet-Z* meet like-minded people in person at every existing university at the expense of the funding of the Bloomberg elite.

Just like Greta used to do, Sérgio and Inês travel with their children to other university districts whenever there's an

opportunity for personal encounters. This year, they're together in Megabelgium, where they're participating in a congress at the Institute for Social-Endemic Diseases in *Brussels-Local*. The Hogans are also present in person. Both families spend the evenings gathering information they've learned locally about John Demeester, the father of one of their great-grandparents. Sérgio is fascinated by what he learns about John's connection to the founders of Institutional Anthropogy back then *Institutional Pedagogy*. Sebastiaan's grandson still has a copy of a collection of John's works, published posthumously by his son and daughter, primarily in Dutch. Sérgio spends several evenings with him and his brother translating certain sections into English and the now-popular Iberian.

The conference is a rich experience for Sérgio and Inês. Sérgio is very excited to meet Abigail Blum again. Together they are preparing two themed issues of *Ignarysis* and launch a *call for papers* about the role of the ideal types of the upper right part of the *framework 95/121* play a role in the growth of totalitarian and fascist local and central governments. At the same time, they also call for further research to complete or rearrange the ideal types in the upper left section. They are particularly interested in comparative research between the degree of arrogance of financing *Bloomcampers* and the degree of arrogance of other knowingly arrogant individuals. Further studies may shed more light on the extent to which both groups relate to the aggressive warmongers. Recent history—of the current century—shows that from a certain point onward, the war industry was no longer considered enriching *Bloomcamp* according to some financiers. It seems that stirring up war was long time been a necessity but only for a certain type of leader. Those were identified as the strategic warmongers. For them, it was primarily about protecting themselves from ongoing processes by placing themselves above the law as strategists. In doing so, they convinced everyone that they were irreplaceable and

untouchable for as long as a war they led lasted. As states disappeared in the most conflict-ridden areas, making way for Megapoleis under a general continental central government or for desert, these strategic warmongers lost their leverage. Some disappeared only to reappear later as cult leaders or fascist leaders in small rural areas. In doing so, they employed intimidation techniques, counter-information, or brute force. Others remained in the Megapoleis and became party leaders. But according to Sérgio, the framework currently reflects little the relationship between the previously invisible power of *Bloomcamp* and who publicly uses techniques to control the Ignorants' aggression towards themselves and channel it towards less aggressive and more knowing types.

Inês connects with those involved in communication from various perspectives. There is considerable interest in studying the impoverishment of language in general. It has long been clear that the rapid increase in the number of Ignorants leads to a flattening of vocabulary, not only in everyday speech, but also in written messages and the entertainment industry. Another phenomenon is the increasing "laziness" to use language-specific vocabulary. According to philologists and sociologists, this is one of the reasons why Iberian is rapidly becoming established and replacing Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, and Galician. In Megabelgium, the Dutch and Flemish dialects have now almost completely anglicised. There is no talk of growing towards a world language. But in every language family, vocabulary is clearly shrinking today, and words to express subtle nuances have long since ceased to be common knowledge. It is a phenomenon for which the novelist Orwell coined the term *Newspeak* more than a century ago The idea is spreading rapidly in almost all megapoleis. With less nuanced language, communication doesn't become easier, but more opaque. All totalitarian populist leaders eagerly use it to keep the ignorant masses under control as best as possible. Inês is worried to see even among *GNet-Z* members some communication difficulties. The

Newspeak phenomenon apparently makes some critics doubt the importance of nuanced language. It seems like an adapted reissue of the whole fuss surrounding the *woke* movement at the beginning of this century. Those who were then still called radical right-wingers not only succeeded in an create an anti-*woke* movement. Many people who thought critically and in a differentiated way also made a simplified analysis leading them to consider the whole of the *woke*-movement a fundamentalist group that could no longer put things into perspective. Then, just as now, sometimes one had to put as much energy into communicating with these critical thinkers as into setting up charter groups to refute populist arguments. Inês confronts Sérgio about her concerns. He links her comments to a form of laziness that he himself notices and is a concern in learning groups that also include their children. This laziness isn't limited to vocabulary and language, he argues. He wonders whether too much is being assumed too easily. It is as of a *Charter of Learners* learning group or its leaders only need to sign to guarantee full cooperation, as if it were a simple routine. According to him, adults don't pay enough attention to certain challenging attitudes children display toward each other. He just discussed a passage from a book by Fernand Oury with the Hogans. In it, Oury discusses the importance of the mediating object in the event of a conflict. It is the adults' task, in each specific situation, to clarify the triangular relationship between two children in conflict and the object of conflict. Only such an analysis leads to finding a satisfactory solution together. By addressing the object of the conflict, the group involved avoids falling into the trap of one being right and the other wrong, of one acting well and the other badly, thus restoring the relationship of trust between the children. Not only language-specific laziness, but also organisation-specific laziness poses a threat to the entire structure of any learning community.

Upon their return to Megalissipo, Sérgio and Inês share their concerns about intellectual laziness with other members of the

discussion groups they are involved in. They agree that the network could be more vigilant in quickly identifying the symptoms of such laziness. The *Ignarysis*-group wants to draw attention to this during *GNet-Z* meetings.

Incidentally, a report from the rural group where the Hunt family is staying suddenly makes the whole discussion about vigilance a priority for other reasons. Initially, the news provokes disbelieving reactions, but gradually there's a danger of a kind of paralysing euphoria. No one knows exactly how, but the local group has hard evidence that the *Bloomcampers* are preparing a top secret project. They have initial plans for building a large space city on *Lagrange point 3* of the sun-earth system. The critical disbelief is primarily based on technical and financial grounds. Quite a few *GNet-Z* members suggest that it is a fabrication by spiritual leaders who went through ancient texts of Philolaus and want to revive the *antichthon* or counter-earth. Why they're doing this, however, remains unclear. More information is released in the coming months. *Bloomcamp* would put pressure on major funds to only finance university projects that make such a project feasible. The Muscle Fund managers are said to be the main lobbyists in this regard. There is even a name popping up. No one knows if that name comes from *Bloomcampers* themselves. Many think it is more of an joke of playful *GNet-Z* members who came up with the name *Elysium.* After all, it recalls a space city in a movie that was quite popular over fifty years ago (and that Greta's mother once saw in the cinema with her father and sister). The film is based on the classic doomsday scenario of almost all futuristic action films of that time. Gradually, the members of the local branches of the underground network discover that the local governments and most of the central governments are unaware of what is being discussed behind the walls of *Bloomcamp*. The space city would serve as a refuge only for the *Bloomcampers.* The totalitarian leaders themselves are nowhere near a part of this group. Only some of the

Central Leaders of the Vineland Continent and the Northeastern part of the Waçúm Continent have Bloomberg value numbers high enough to make them part of this elite group. And they keep the plans completely hidden from their less affluent fellow leaders.
The reaction to the confirmation of the rumours is at least remarkable. A significant part of the *GNet-Z*-members consider the project a good thing. Everyone will now know that the Bloomberg elite is betraying its own proxies. The totalitarian forms of government will then disappear of their own accord, many cheer. This is precisely what Greta and Inês call paralysing euphoria. According to them, it's a dangerous kind of "*wishful thinking*". There is another contradictory aspect to this. Many *GNet-Z* members believe that few scientists worldwide would be willing to participate in such a secret, monster project. Yet, the euphoria persists. The project is coming, we don't quite know how, and that will mean the end of the totalitarian populists. Rather incongruously, the community accepts the veracity of the evidence but denies that it's being worked on worldwide. The redeeming space city seems like some kind of miraculous solution. Within the Charter Groups, discussions sometimes become very heated. The content of some of these discussions can only confirm Sérgio and Inês's concerns about institutional laziness.

In October 2080, Catherine Demeester dies shortly before her ninety-fifth birthday. It is a heavy blow to the entire family, but Joana is particularly hard-pressed. Greta and Sérgio had explained to Catherine just a few weeks earlier how they planned to experiment with small-scale initiatives based on direct democracy. They invited the now quite large group of friends of the Paulo Demeester Library to participate. They also made arrangements with four local *Zafonis*-learning communities to continually consult with each other about the working methods of their respective groups. Catherine insisted on involving both Joana and Inês, jokingly remarking that they should thus acquire three-quarters of a

century of communication expertise. Thus, Inês and the members of her working groups quickly became permanent consultants for direct democracy initiatives. Naturally, the couple treats the direct democracy experiments with a certain discretion. Democracy and interaction are completely inappropriate for local and central government. Furthermore, the participants in the experiments find it unbelievable that so many of their fellow thinkers consider they don't have to do anything and that totalitarian forms of government will automatically be replaced by advanced pluralistic decision-making solely for the sake of the *Elysium*- fantasy in Bloomkamp.
Joana follows the experiments with direct democracy and decision-making as closely as she can. She believes it is a wonderful example of what she intuitively felt was necessary when she formulated the first time the *Charter of the Learner*. She warns Inês about how routines can take over. She recalls a quip about the paradoxical routine of keeping the institutionalising institution institutional, in order to avoid an institutionalised institution. Joana is not as surprised as the others by the optimism of their euphoric kindred spirits. She is firmly convinced that pluralism does not develop spontaneously. Yet, she finds it not unlikely that the *Bloomcampers* perhaps lend a helping hand without even wanting to. The future will provide answers, she says, and perhaps even quite soon.

Joana dies in 2082, and in a sense, her prediction was correct. But it will take at least another seventy years for this to become clear. An immediate confirmation if you look at it from a general historical perspective, a confirmation that will take some time if you count generations.
That same year, with the exception of a few universities, all school buildings worldwide are permanently closed. As has happened repeatedly since the first settlements, the cloak of ignorance and dogma will once again envelop humanity.

The intellectual kidnapping(2083-2090)

After the death of both Demeester sisters, a new phase begins for *Ignarysis* and for all cooperators in the ever-expanding ignarometric network. Many groups that are part of *GNet-Z* are closely involved in all humanities research utilises ignarometry. Sérgio and Inês are recognised as valuable advisors for initiatives based on direct democracy. The academic work of Joana and Ester Langlauf, which addresses communication, is invaluable. Inês uses it as a basis for her own research and finds great support in Greta, who has compiled short summaries of all the publications by her father and co-authors. Their perspective on machine learning and the collaboration between what is commonly known as artificial intelligence — they call it electronic intelligence — and biological intelligence is very valuable in establishing communities based on the rules of direct democracy.

Communities want to be able to make decisions without everyone having the same in-depth knowledge on a particular topic. There are also communities whose members live in widely separated locations, whether in a district of a megalopolis or in a rural area. In both cases, transparent communication is paramount. In all communities, everyone is aware that they know more about certain topics than others. This also raises everyone's awareness that knowing more about a particular topic doesn't automatically mean everyone sees the importance of supporting or rejecting a particular proposal. Communities know all too well how populist, arrogant decision-makers push through their own proposals, claiming that it's a conscious choice by all involved. It's abundantly clear today that the manipulation of the passive Ignorants only serves *Bloomcampers* benefits at the expense of almost all Earth's ecosystems, which are becoming increasingly disrupted. Even decisions that seem good at first glance all too often have disastrous

consequences in the long run. That's why *Zafonis*-groups and Charter Groups spend a great deal of time developing clear communication. Electronic intelligence is often an added value to the often emotionally driven biological intelligence of both those defending a proposal and those who have doubts about it. Transparent information helps members of a community be more open to each other and gain better mutual understanding.

Direct democracy needs time. It's abundantly clear that any form of arrogance is an obstacle to this form of consultation and decision-making. In almost all direct democracy groups, members sooner or later realise that good decision-making benefits community life overall. Obstacles are generally economic in nature. The groups themselves guarantee diversity and certainly don't advocate egalitarian flattening. Yet, direct democracy is difficult when certain members of the group cling to selfish advantages. These advantages are usually related to having more money. Greta often thinks of her mother and Hypolite d'Ailleurs. Two generations later, Sérgio and Inês experience a well-developed form of direct democracy in the local community where they live. The merging of a gated community of wealthier citizens with a community of neighbours with almost no resources developed rapidly once financing was considered not a personal but a group matter. Financing authorised travel was the starting point. There's still a good policy for this when bureaucracy shows its worst side and decides to grant permission to travel to someone other than the group's designated person. This is the case, for example, when a group decision goes against the funding agency's policy regarding the selection of participants for international meetings. In their community, it's quite common to prefer not to send anyone on a trip to an unelected member. The community can always use the *GNet-Z* satellites to allow those chosen by the community itself to participate remotely.

Of course, the totalitarian leaders of the megapoleis see how the

Knowers manage to include not arrogant Ignorants in their communities of direct democracy. *Bloomcampers* literally live in their own world and attach little importance to this aspect. They do keep an eye on the local authorities themselves, even though they are only puppets. At *Bloomcamp* there is talking about a luxury stronghold as a stopover while waiting for the *Elysium* Dream, perhaps somewhere near the Sequoia condominium in Southeast Vineland. The world's poor population doesn't perturb the elite. That population simply doesn't have the resources to threaten anything. A handful of Ignorants who do receive training and education, even in a Charter Group, won't change anything. No, if there is any threat, it comes from the totalitarian leaders and their circle of individuals with limited, permissible privileges. They aren't ignorant enough to be easily manipulated, especially since they themselves have become masters of manipulation. They themselves are responsible for most of the conspiracy theories. For now, these theories point to the Knowers and those among the Not Arrogant Ignorants who manage to obtain a good education. The enthusiastic but ignorant followers of these populist leaders are told that intellectuals and members of Charter Groups are the truly privileged. *Bloomcamp* on the other hand acquires a certain romantic aura. But the followers of the populist totalitarian leaders are unaware, and the leaders themselves pretend not to know, that the Bloomcamp leaders discreetly continue to support these top scientists of world renown, who are untouchable to them, even if well-known critics. It is particularly ironic how many of these scientists themselves seem to dismiss the purpose of this discreet support. Although the wealth of the *Bloomcampers* is subject to much criticism, the intellectual community readily accepts donations coming from personal funds. Even the hidden satellites of *GNet-Z* when push comes to shove, are maintained with money from *Bloomcamp*. It seems like a kind of double negative, where the richest inhabitants of the earth once again have more advantage.

The children of Sérgio and Inês and their family, like all other children in their community, receive a first-class education. This is thanks to their own learning communities, with a quality that no school could provide, even during the promising but short-lived Era of the learner. There is significant attention paid to personal interests and talents. Part of the program's success relies on personal coaching or remote work in small groups spanning the globe.

Fernanda and Joana Mestre's interests lie primarily in the natural sciences. But one day Fernanda meets Victor Hunt Jr., and her full attention shifts to mathematics. While her twin sister focuses on physics and chemistry, Fernanda studies Hilbert spaces, quantum mathematics, and quantum mechanics under Hunt's guidance. Even before her eighteenth birthday she immerses herself in the work of Claude Cohen-Tannoudji.

When she visits her great-uncle Francisco, he asks: "Why this interest in mathematics?"

Fernanda begins immediately: "I'm only interested in a small area of mathematics, Uncle Francisco. The research of Claude Cohen, Steven Chu, and William Phillips kept me somewhat close to the natural sciences, but only to the quantum interpretation of nature, both quantum chemistry and quantum biology."

"Quantum interpretation... natural sciences. Homesick for working with your twin sister?" her uncle asks.

Fernanda laughs and says, "Joana and I are currently each walking along a rail of the same scientific railway. Every now and then, we exchange information via one of the sleepers."

"Let's just say I understand the word 'sleeper'," Francisco jokes. "Being a bit of a dreaming sleeper is always a good thing. And hobbies?"

Fernanda continues enthusiastically: "I've recently been talking with a group of students who are studying the theoretical approach to superconducting binary hydrides. This approach covers the

quantum computers needed for the further development of electronic intelligence. More efficient cooling of such computers in space would significantly improve electronic intelligence and thus lead to fewer errors requiring human intervention. Raman or Sisyphus cooling are certainly good, but very expensive and still not completely reliable methods for maintaining a stable temperature at a few micro kelvins. If we succeed in our plan, the next step will be to set up a fully automated relay station for spacecraft, probes, and other observation equipment on *Lagrange 3* in the Earth-Sun system. This point, which is permanently invisible from Earth, has been of great interest since the beginning of the century.

“You could also say that there was interest in that point even before it was scientifically determined in antiquity…” Francisco notes.

“Yes,” says Fernanda, “But I’m thinking about the quantum computer itself, a kind of quantum brain. That’s why I’m now studying functional analysis and quantum groups, and especially Hopf algebra and braid groups. Ultimately, I’m looking for partners to further develop the topological quantum computer. Quantum braids are much more stable than trapped quantum particles in a classical quantum computer, and that could change significantly once the anyons can be better controlled. But perhaps that's only possible at temperatures of zero degrees Kelvin.”

When Fernanda sees her uncle’s grimace, she laughs and adds, “And that immediately explains my hobby…”

Fernanda’s description of her mathematical interests is generally not well-understood within the family, but the mathematics she develops herself but soon that is also the case among her fellow students. It doesn’t take long before her work attracts the attention of the administrators of the Azos-fund for theoretical mathematics. Unbeknownst to Fernanda, two mathematicians from the Megabelgium University Pool are following the still relatively immature publications of the talented student.

It is inevitable. Gradually the gap increases between the rich

Bloomcamp and the authoritarian leaders of the Central and Local governments. The *Bloomcampers* view the world today as a game board over which they have absolute control. Between them, they own almost all means of production, raw materials, and investment funds. They express these assets in three globally used currencies. Medium-sized transactions with those with an implanted identity chip can still be conducted in Megapoleis. Truly large transactions only take place in one of the *Bloomcamp*-condominiums and are subject to iris verification.

In rural communities, people had already long since returned to barter. Some communities opted to refine direct democracy. In these communities, genuine trade is still virtually nonexistent. Everyone has their own activities. The scarce goods and raw materials quickly become common property, if one can still call them property. Everyone uses only what is necessary for their own activity. Families and learning communities have a communal vegetable garden. Poultry, sheep, and goats are raised for protein. Highly educated individuals who emigrated to such a rural community and young people who, thanks to a *Zafonis*-learning group received technical training provide the necessary infrastructure to prevent such a community from sliding into ignorance. The *GNet-Z* guarantees the supply of certain sophisticated equipment to a particular community upon request. In every university pool, one find those who are very creative in using donations and investment fund income to help rural communities. This isn't done entirely in secret and is condoned by the totalitarian regimes under pressure from *Bloomcamp* itself. However, when certain individuals become too visible, they are unofficially given a choice by a Central Government: lose all privileges and move under control to a peripheral district, or disappear of their own accord to a rural community. In the first case, the identification chip is modified, in the second, removed. Typically, such a person chooses the second option and is then given an *outcast* status. Officially, the

person has died.
The Central Governments have nothing to gain from aggressive action against rural communities. According to *Bloomcamp* these communities are completely devoid of economic significance. Therefore, they pose no threat. The totalitarian leaders, who possess extensive espionage resources, filter the information they send to the megapoleis. No one speaks of intellectuals who choose to move to a rural community. The policies pursued by the three largest Central Governments (the Central Government of the United Abya Yala Megapoleis, the United Erebúm State Cities Central Government, and the Central Government of Waçúm United Megapoleis) only support local governments when they are troubled by organised groups of ignorant poor people. There have to be someone made responsible originating poverty and making the poor cannot afford specialised medical care, are not allowed to travel, and generally only have access to inferior products. Even the strict district regulations occasionally fail in this regard. Local authorities remain convinced that they wield real power and want to avoid losing it at all costs. Without realising the massive manipulation, they assign themselves a double role. They are busy making reassuring reports because they think the Central Boards and *Bloomcamp* to convince them to keep funding them because they are the best. Furthermore, they want a potentially aggressive crowd as far away from themselves and from *Bloomcamp* as they can. Today we know that the well-developed illusionary network led to an unprecedented economic catastrophe, with money becoming a meaningless concept on Earth. But that hadn't happened a century and a half ago.

The illusionary network of the selfish monetary nomenclature works perfectly. It succeeds in making all Local Governments believe they are in control. The world-owning, secluded within *Bloomkamp* are convinced they command all resources and that all the stock market and investment machinations only have a positive

effect on their own enrichment. Moreover, the arrogant ignorant leaders of the Local Governments help.

Meanwhile, they're developing more and more conspiracy theories aimed at making the Knowers the source of all evil. They think this is necessary to conceal the Executive's privileges. The smokescreen they've created is working well. Don't the Knowers have all the privileges, the rumour goes, just because they live in the university districts? Don't they get the health visas to travel that were denied to all other Megapolis residents? Don't the Knowers warn about everything and anything? Climate change, infections, plagues — you name it, they're talking about it. Meanwhile, they're quietly living better than the rest of the population.

But then suddenly things go wrong. The distant *Bloomcampers* learn too late how Local Government provides support to the *Counter Measure for Culture and Library Clans* of *Cou-Clib-Clans*. The *Cou-Clib-Clans* consist of well-organised, arrogant and unconditional conspiracy theorists against researchers and intellectuals — in short, against Knowers. They first appear as book burners. They are not simple locally incited ignorant individuals, but well-directed arsonists. They themselves believe they belong to a secret, purifying circle. The first targeted attacks against specific researchers, deemed to origin too much difficulties by local officials, were virtually invisible.

When *Bloomcamp* fund managers express concern about the disappearance of a researcher important to them, local authorities hypocritically express their condolences. They point to the unprovoked uprisings of book burners that force researchers into hiding and say they will do everything in their power to prevent a recurrence. Often, these words remain empty words…

It is in this increasing hostility towards science and intellectuals, in which arrogant attacks become more and more frequent, Fernanda Mestre grew up.

Both at the Local Government of Megalissipo and in the local *Cou-*

Clib-Clan the distrust towards the Demeester, Mestre and N'Kondo families is increasing every day. But like other families who are immediately useful to *Bloomcamp* they are efficiently protected at the highest level without even knowing it. The upper-class wealthy are only interested in what is immediately useful to them. Any form of research without direct profit is stopped. And now *Bloomcamp* hardens position. What seems promising must no longer be touched. Hitting the Mestre family at this point would have a definite negative impact on the current members of the Local Government. That was made clear to the President of the Polis, without further information.
The reason? The Azos-fund managers think the branch of mathematics Fernanda is working on and developing almost single-handedly won't just address the technical problems she envisions. Perhaps she'll also revolutionise how to work with the physical limitations imposed by the laws of mass making space travel easier.

Two years later, Fernanda is on the high-speed train to the Western University Hub in Megabelgium. She is 19 and the youngest participant in a think tank organised by that central university. The reason for this is that she received the *Maryam Mirzakhani New Frontiers Prize* for her doctorate '*New hypothese to approach Wightman axioms for d = 4' ,* which she completed in record time. The meeting will take place at the Bradin district, named after one of the university towns mentioned by the 20th-century writer Thijsen in his SF saga about space exploration. She will join a group of mathematicians to exchange ideas about ultrafast space travel. Quantum gravity is a key topic of discussion. Fernanda will use the trip to reread Carlo Rovelli and review a work by Zefram Cochrane. A few years before her birth, Cochrane described the technical feasibility of moving a mass at the speed of light using a form of Alcubierre propulsion. Some researchers in the field of quantum gravity claim his disappearance is related to space travel he himself announced would be faster than the speed of light. His mysterious

disappearance seems to demonstrate that for those on Earth, the problem remains technically unresolved. For many, the known mathematical description is incomplete and Cochrane himself is said to have secretly made fatal changes. Others say he relied on the Casimir effect and simply died in the attempt because he lacked the necessary technology.

On her return trip, Fernanda feels in a sense reborn. The think tank gave her many ideas to continue working with some young people she met in Megabelgium on the mathematical concept that might effectively make *WARP* propulsion possible. She herself is particularly keen to further develop her own ideas related to anyons and quantum computers. Enthusiastically, she seeks out her grandmother upon her return home. Greta listens to her patiently. Then she says: “I am incredibly proud of my granddaughter, who has become such a math whiz. Dear child, keep your twin sister informed of your activities, but with some caution. You know how much she likes to be in the Polis president’s circle. I understand she clearly has a soft spot for his eldest son.”

“Why are you saying that, Grandma?” asks Fernanda.

“Healthy doubt, nothing more,” Greta answers. You know that your great-uncles and I don’t exactly belong to the intimate circle of friends of the Local Government. Your eternally optimistic father always keeps a low profile. Still, I wonder about this sudden rapprochement between your sister and the presidential son. It could very well be a fling. But Alexandre and I never see the actions of those in power without second thoughts. Perhaps they want to gather confidential information about our library work and the Charter Groups. And you are an exceptional example of the educational value of our children’s learning communities. The Central and Local Governments generally leave rural communities alone, but it would be better if those governments didn’t know too much about your contacts with people like Hunt Jr. and other leading figures in science who are very critical of the state of affairs

and currently live outside the megapoleis. The many viruses and local conflicts don't change the fact that the planet is still significantly overpopulated. The megapoleis are bursting at the seams. Water is becoming scarce. Nowadays, every Megapolis has rationed products. In many places there are frequent shortages of basic foods. You know it well, although we ourselves experience little discomfort. We are among the few non-wealthy families who receive priority treatment in all health matters. In rural areas, scientists are generally even more critical of *Bloomcamp*. We are of course aware that the Local Authority is aware of our ties with *GNet-Z* but they still leaves us more or less at ease. We belong to the group of scientists the universities are interested in. Don't forget that the primary mission of these universities is to support local and central governments. But if they really learned about the close ties our family maintains with the most critical rural Non-Ignorants or Knowers, as they themselves call them, then our status might change! The governments fear the consequences of arrogant ignorant revolts. They themselves are experts in manipulation, and the world is known by its own standards. And even though they know us, they easily assume that our learning communities primarily serve to manipulate."

"And you think my sister is being used?"

Greta sighs. "I'm a little worried, but I'm an old woman, what do you expect? I feel how not only your twin sister, but also your younger brothers, are increasingly withdrawing from our family. Yes, I know, I know, those two are in the midst of their teenage crisis, but still... if they had no privileges at all, I could understand how they'd be drawn to those circles. But like you, they're not ignorant at all. I wonder if their choice of friends isn't due to their desire for luxury items. The rest of the family hasn't been interested in those for a long time, and their new friends now have excellent bait…"

Fernanda usually doesn't have much time to ponder her

grandmother’s doubts. She's busy. The small circle of gifted mathematicians increasingly occupies her time. Some confirmations for her proposed hypothesis emerge, but colleagues also point out ambiguities in some proofs. Together, they try to eliminate inconsistencies. Ultimately, the small group of theoretical mathematicians studying Hilbert spaces and Abelian and non-Abelian anyons accepts her hypothesis as the Mestre-Hypothesis. The group believes that definitive proof of the hypothesis will soon be forthcoming. No one really questions the fact that both the Bradin district at Megabelgium University and the Boston district at Megapple University continue to have generous funding. There is great optimism among researchers. Various groups can work indefinitely on the mathematical problems of the Alcubierre propulsion system. Perhaps it will finally become a technical reality early in the next century.

There are, however, strict rules regarding the use of the funds. No personal enrichment of any researcher is tolerated. It’s especially Fernanda’s colleagues from Megapple who struggle with this, and twice a top researcher suddenly disappears completely from public view.

Fernanda now has more frequent conversations with Victor Hunt Jr. through a *GNet-Z* Satellite line. At the end of a technical conversation in late January 2090, she casually mentions the disappearance of a young American mathematician with whom she often videoconferenced. There’s a pause on the other end of the line. Then Hunt Jr. begins to discuss the plague of industrial and geopolitical espionage during the first half of the 20th century, which caused major financial anxiety on most world stock exchanges.

Fernanda looks puzzled. “I’m talking about the disappearance of a colleague today, why are you talking about past espionage?”

Hunt Jr. says enigmatically: “Old habits die hard. What we learn from the *Bloomcampers* is we know that they are generally better

informed than we think. Local or central government officials display their ignorance, often without realising it. But it would be a mistake to think that those at the top amass wealth and power are not well-informed.
Fernanda asks with a slight laugh: “Are conspiracy theories also popular in rural communities these days?” She gestures with both hands to put conspiracy theory in quotation marks.
Hunt Jr. responds: “I think you know what I mean. Maintain a low profile at all times and focus solely on the mathematical problems you’re working on. They’re of the utmost importance to us, too.”
He concludes with a warning: “Fernanda, be careful when having conversations in the presence of students who do not really show themselves to be top mathematicians.”
Both avatars hug and disconnect.

At the Windsor condominium, two highly specialised Bloomberg 10 numbers exchange glances after switching off the spy line they were using to listen in on Fernanda and Victor Hunt Jr.’s conversation.
“That Victor Hunt Jr. is becoming more and more the same nuisance his father was.”
“What? Has he died yet?”
“We can’t figure it out. In conversations about him, no one hints at anything. We’ve tried three times to get in-person confirmation by sending people there, but to this day, they simply haven’t returned.”
“People from Windsor Condominium aren’t coming back? Really?”
“No, they weren’t from our condominium. Of course not. No one is crazy at the point to leave, especially since we adjusted our criteria and rarely allow Bloomberg 8+ anymore. But they were still valuable employees.”
“Well, ultimately that’s a side issue. Do you think we should do something about Fernanda Mestre?”
“We have to proceed very carefully. If our information is correct, Fernanda is currently one of the most valuable promises for solving

the anyon problem and thus giving a huge boost to artificial intelligence. The *WARP* Utopians primarily want to use it to concretise their space travel fantasies. We are not interested in that today. We want the necessary robotised answers from those top researchers to help us *Elysium*-project to be realised."

"Is that really going to happen?"

"Look. We have to find a solution before the end of the century. And *Elysium* is simply the most feasible option unless we find a safe haven on Earth. And that seems increasingly impossible. Large parts of the planet are uninhabitable, either due to desertification or constant hurricanes and floods. That damned Thunberg of the 2010s and 2020s was mostly right, wasn't she? Some of our *Bloomcamp* Condominiums, including Windsor, will be equipped with electromagnetic shields next year, but you can already predict that things will get out of hand and that there will be major riots. There are also disturbing reports about the Central District Boards of the *Anglo-Saxon Federation*, of *Féderation Eurocentre*, by *The Middle Kingdom* and *United Federation of American States*."

"About or from?"

"*About.* Autocratic leaders would want to belong to the upper class themselves."

"Why? Wasn't it clear during the early years of totalitarian regimes that the two are incompatible? It's impossible to be among the Bloomberg 9+ and simultaneously have too much public profile. Look at how some of the top figures of the 2020s suddenly tumbled down the ladder after their unbridled egocentrism launched them into public politics. They fared very poorly."

"Yes. But this is the opposite way. Some of our puppets want to go into hiding with us, and that's why they want to enrich themselves first, often through illegal means."

"Are there also legitimate ways to become that rich so you can advance to 9+?"

"Hey, are you influenced by those critics you're observing? This is

dangerous language, buddy."
"Okay, this was *off the record*. But '*about*' and not '*from*'?"
"Yes, we may have to remove some leaders and replace them with more ignorant, arrogant ones who will blindly follow us."
"And the control over intellectuals? I recently heard that the *Cou-Clib-clans* begin to appear in centers that interest us and cause destruction there."
"Exactly. That's the problem. We just realised it in time, but maybe we're too late. That *clans* think they're acting independently, even we thought so. But ultimately we know, they're rather cleverly controlled. As long as we were convinced they were merely adhering to the conspiracy theories spread by the Local Governments, we thought things would work out just fine. But some of those Governments are planning to harm us by trying to take a piece of the pie for themselves. Instead of following our guidelines! Nowadays, we know that the Local Governments I just mentioned are financing *Cou-Clib-clans* with money they receive from us, mind you! As long as they were attacking small private libraries and learning communities, we were unaware of what was happening, but now they're also attacking the groups and universities we discreetly fund. Despite everything, some leaders of the Central Government have started thinking and have sometimes drawn alarming conclusions…"
"Okay. Now I get it. And back to Fernanda Mestre."
"Good. That whole family is terribly dangerous. The family runs almost the whole *Ignarysis*-group. This group is very useful for us in understanding how the opposition to Bloomkamp and our economic vision is developing. Unfortunately, the two family branches descended from Joana and Catherine Demeester contain indispensable elements for the *Ignarysis*-group going on. Moreover, Megalissipo seems to be a good breeding ground for very interesting researchers. Fernanda Mestre herself is a proverbial example of this. We must keep her working without her realising that she's mainly

working for us. We must allow her family to have some trouble with the Government. It can't get too bad, or they'll disappear without a trace, as many Knowers do these days. But it can't be too little either, because that would arouse suspicion. Neither the Local Government nor the family themselves must realise that they're being spared by us."

"And that rural community with the Hunt family?"

"Okay, they are indeed dangerous. You heard how accurate the information is that Hunt Jr. is passing on to Fernanda. But that damn *GNet-Z*. They have better technicians than we do. Moreover, they belong to that small community of empathetic and highly educated pluralistic humanists who can't be bribed. There's no way to keep up with them permanently. They simply don't exist electronically; I don't know how they manage it."

"And that means?"

"This means, my dear young colleague, that we have never succeeded in discovering the precise or approached geographic location of the most select rural groups. We only know these small communities live between the tropics. But that's a vast area. Many parts of it are difficult or simply inaccessible even to the circulating bands of Ignorants. They don't possess nearly the knowledge to find such locations, except by sheer chance. And even if such a thing did happen, they are probably simply absorbed into one of those rural groups, which rarely numbers more than fifty thousand individuals."

"Can't we just make the entire area uninhabitable? In the last century, quite a few chemical and biological weapons were developed and proved their worth."

"No, we can't. We're talking about a land area of over 53 million square kilometers, which is just over a third of the planet's total land area. Before the major epidemical outbreaks of the 2050s and 2060s, about half the world's population lived there. These days, we have no idea how many communities actually live between the

tropics, but perhaps there are a few more on the Alkebulan continent. And that's just guesswork, simply because Alkebulan encompasses two-fifths of the tropical landmass. Chemically burning or biologically exterminating all of that would be the final death blow for all of us. So we can't start this before we ourselves leave Earth, and in this case, the departure could be final. No one is really willing to do that…"
"So we must continue to rule and divide and make sure we remain in the shadows."
"We?"
"I mean our Bloomberg 9+ elite."
"Yeah, that's what it comes down to."
The colleagues leave the observation room laughing.

Greta enters the Library House. Alexandre is setting up the meeting room for the performance of two children's stories by Manuela. The children from one of the Charter Groups supported by the Library House will be arriving for the performance in an hour. Alexandra lends a hand. She arranges the cushions for the children to sit on, much to the gracious protest of her father, who wants to demonstrate how flexible he still is when bending over and standing up. Greta rearranges the books in the children's library. Within easy reach, all the information woven into the stories that will be performed today is available. The first story is about a group of planet cleaners. A group of young people takes on the task of protecting a forest plantation in their neighbourhood. In doing so, they meet some children of illiterate, unfamiliar people, whom they playfully integrate into their group. With their new friends, they connect with each other's parents. The second story is a kind of fairy tale. Three children embark on an exploration and leave their district in the Megapolis. They meet a talking bear and later a talking dolphin. Both take them to a large magic park where people and animals live together. Together, animals and people care for the animals, people, and plants, making the large magic park

increasingly healthy.

Greta is collecting books, drawings, and short films with information about the state of the planet. It's about nature, about the misunderstandings of the ignorant, both regarding conservation and about the misinformation surrounding the actual state of the planet. Like many of the activities in the library, Greta and Alexandre aim to help the children develop a critical mind.

After the performance, Manuela and Alexandra will lead the discussion with the children, recommending the available books and videos to those interested, based on everyone's interest.

Greta and Alexandre go to the private part of the house to drink herbal tea. For several weeks now, there has been no coffee available in the entire university district. This year, there were major difficulties with the coffee harvest. The roasted beans were primarily transported to the *Bloomcamp* Condominiums. There is some substitute coffee made from roasted roots, usually of poor quality.

"Have you followed what the rural *GNet-Z* tell us about the departments from central Alkebulan and Equatorial Abya Yala in recent months?" Greta asks her cousin.

"The electromagnetic shields at *Bloomcamp* Condominiums? Alberta and Fernanda recently had a conversation about that. Honestly, I couldn't keep up when they went technical."

Greta smiles. "No, when they're busy together, I often can't keep up either. But I was thinking about other news. The ones about shelters for Non-Ignorants. They say there are refuges in the making for those who want to preserve science and culture."

"Refuge places. Yes, I heard something like that. But I didn't really understand why. We still have our *GNet-Z* and the suggestions of the *Cemetery of Forgotten Books* to protect books and works of art. And aren't there digital libraries?"

"Well, the most pessimistic members of our groups see in the new attacks of the book burners a threat on a large scale, even to a

hidden Book Cemetery and to digital information."
"Are they going to burn down server rooms now too?"
"Don't burn them directly. Although we often use the term "book burners", don't forget that we're talking about centrally well-organised groups whose goal is to destroy science and culture."
"The *Cou-clib-clans*, yes, I know, of course."
"Well, the electromagnetic shields you were talking about earlier are not just about protection against threats from space. Electromagnetic attacks are being planned by certain *Cou-clib-clans* on specific locations. The *GNet-Z* is trying to figure out which ones. But we must also take seriously the threat of destruction from electromagnetic storms from space. Deep underground drilling and nuclear detonations to extract metallic ores from the Earth's mantle appear to cause small disturbances in Earth's magnetism. These disturbances are enough to make parts of the Earth's surface much more sensitive to the solar wind."
"So not only the *Cou-clib-clans*, but also the devastated nature itself is currently a real threat to the scientific heritage?"
"Roughly so. For now, no one knows what will survive the aggression and what won't in the coming decades."
"Not so nice."
"Not nice at all. The rural *GNet-Z* groups urge all members to memorise one work of their choice in its entirety and to always carry at least two copies of that same work: a written or printed version and a digital copy on a memory card or other easily protected device. The purpose of memorisation is to recover the content of the chosen work even if hard copies are partially or completely destroyed."
"And those memorising members would then seek out those places of refuge?"
"Not would. The movement is already underway. I recently heard for the first time the expression *Walking Books*. These are members of a direct democracy community who move to such a refuge."

“Walking Books!”
“Yes, some are accompanied by *Document Keepers*.”
“And?”
“If I understand correctly some of those *Custodians* become the documents themselves — literally, through the implantation of certain devices — with material that does not exist in written form… photographs, digital films, reproductions, you name it…”
“Isn’t that very extreme? It’s like a return to the *Republic of Letters*, but under *Oral* shape, damn it!”
“Is all of us *GNet-Z,* successor of the *Hortublic* not a modern form of that *Res Publica Litteraria.* Even the most pessimistic members believe we are heading towards extreme situations. They want to prevent humanity from falling back into a state of barbarism at all costs. They paint apocalyptic scenarios that rival even the most violent science fiction films. They consider their proposal merely a practical implementation of our general protection duty. But there are also less extreme suggestions.”
“Ah! Now I understand the call for library owners to store more sensitive documents safely in underground shelters, preferably in radiation-resistant containers.”
“Yes. And, Alexandre, please forgive me, but I think we cannot delay any longer. The *Cou-clib-clans* are becoming more and more aggressive, even in until today relatively quiet places like Megalissipo. I propose that we organise safe underground storage for everything concerning ignarometry and *Ignarysis* and that we make facsimiles available to the Charter Groups.”

Two months later, the Library House is renovated. The basement was given a radiation-resistant lining. Books, magazines, files, and digital devices were moved to the basement after being treated with moisture-resistant material. Now the entire floor is hermetically sealed. Sérgio Mestre took over the supervision of the work. During those two months, he was barely home. He and Inês had one visit from their two sons during that period. When the conversation

briefly turned to the Library House, both reacted extremely hostilely. The eldest claimed that such houses discredit the good work of the Local Government and should actually be destroyed. He told his parents that Alberta had better not consider living in the Paulo Demeester House. According to him, the Local Government will permanently close the house as soon as Manuela and Alexandre are willing to leave. And that, he added, is because of the sentimentalism of his younger brother, who stood up for their grandmother. Although both boys are convinced that their grandmother is wrong about most political matters, they do not want to cause her the grief of not being able to visit the house where she spent so much of her childhood in her old age.
Inês and Sérgio are startled by the enthusiasm with which both sons present the local oligarch's policies as an example of involvement with the people of Megalissipo. Both boys also inform their parents that they have applied for a civil servant position at the Central Administration of the European Federation for Iberian Affairs. If accepted, both will move to the closed Euro-Brussels district in Megabelgium. They will then be virtually unreachable from outside. They can, however, provide video links themselves. However, anyone wishing to reach them must send a request to a central dispatching center. The RESULT network also has separate rail cars for those traveling to Euro-Brussels. Sérgio and Inês will not be able to visit their children there. No visitor visa is provided for these kinds of closed districts. Sérgio sarcastically remarks that the Central Administration and its officials are very good at hiding from the people they claim to serve in an exemplary manner. His youngest son shrugs his shoulders and says that everyone has long known how difficult their parents are about everything.

Fernanda is saddened to hear her brothers want to live so secluded. She still visits Megabelgium regularly and had hoped they would see each other more often after the appointment was confirmed. But the opposite is true. The strict separation between

Euro-Brussels and what used to be Local-Brussels remains. The districts around Euro-Brussels are simply part of Megabelgium. Civil servants not born in there are not allowed in. They can only travel to their own region of origin and are screened daily. Fernanda notes that there's little difference between a civil servant of the European Federation and a detainee with an ankle monitor. It seems her brothers prefer to live in a cage. Both shrug their shoulders at this as well. They find the prospect of living in a gilded cage quite appealing.

Just before summer, the boys receive the news that they had been selected at the behest of the Local Oligarch of Megalissipo. They depart for their golden cage with great excitement. Just before they left Megalissipo, a new local decree comes into effect regulating the right to opt out. The boys considered this a wonderful proposal within the framework of democratic rules. Individual freedom should be possible, they argue, and this proposal meets that requirement. Everyone should have the right to withdraw from collective decision-making. Moreover, this promotes the effectiveness of professional government. Sérgio and Inês see this decree as another measure to encourage passivity among the population. The policy further isolates the population. This is precisely the antithesis of democracy. But those who endorse the decree don't see it that way. Everyone can participate, but by incorporating this right into the law, everyone who wishes to do so is protected from voting obligations or compulsory participation in certain government activities.

Sérgio and Inês inform Greta how her grandsons advocate for the right to non-participation. This leads the conversation to the contradictions of democratic representation.

"It seems like that classic paradox of democracy all over again," Greta begins. "If you give people the right to participate, can that right also mean not participating in democratic decision-making?"

"Participating is ultimately a personal choice, isn't it, Mom?" says

Sérgio. “And we’ve already talked about it, when we talk about pluralism, which for me transcends democracy. In democracy, the majority usually rules… I think that in a truly pluralistic system, everyone is happy to participate. The less administrative hierarchy there is, the more useful everyone’s contribution is. In conventional democratic systems, there’s always the difficulty of representativeness. Naturally, people drop out as soon as they don’t feel truly represented.”

“But I suspect that my grandsons are not only thinking about personal choices,” Greta continues.

“I agree with you,” says Inês. “My dear husband is an eternal optimist. I’m not. When I hear our boys’ words, I recognise the reasoning populist leaders like to use. Participation isn’t necessary, they say. For many people, that’s a waste of time, especially when the government takes care of everything. Making that a right to non-participation is a political tool to, in a sense, disempower people.”

“But someone can still invoke their right to non-participation for certain things and not for others, right?” asks Sérgio.

“The right to non-participation is a fallacy — an offer not to consider certain topics,” Greta reiterates. “Complex decisions usually involve many technical aspects. Understanding that aspect is difficult for both those who represent and those who are represented. Those who make decisions on behalf of others might recommend non-participation to avoid wasting time providing explanations, for example, or to avoid a very large group having to study the file, or…”

“Isn’t that a bit far-fetched, Mom?” asks Sérgio.

“I don’t think so. It’s cheaper and more subtle than setting up disinformation campaigns. Think of the so-called popular governments in the first half of the last century in Europe, Asia, and South America, when those continents were still divided into states. Everything was supposed to be done for the people and in their

name, and some representatives genuinely believed that. In most cases, one of two situations arose. Either participation was neither necessary nor desirable, and divergent opinions were simply ignored. Therefore, no one sought compromises. Majority decisions usually garnered a “support” of more than 98% of the “representatives”. The right to non-participation amounted to asking those who disagreed to leave the country. This is more humane than imprisoning or murdering opponents, which also often happened, but it remains an arrogant solution. Less drastic, but arrogant. Moreover, such a solution was not without danger for autocratic leaders, because those who did not participate within the state and thus lived outside its borders could then take action from outside. Not Rarely did those violent contours take on. No, excluding people in the name of their own well-being and that of everyone else doesn't seem to me to be a good solution in the long run, no matter how. Today, there’s another, not insignificant difference. The autocratic, populist leaders in central and local government don’t even govern in the name of the people, although that’s often said. They govern in the name o f*Bloomcamp* and a little in their own name.”

Meanwhile, Fernanda enters the room. She hears her grandmother’s last remark and then says: “There are colleagues in our research groups who even believe that the most ignorant leaders in local government don’t govern in their own name at all. They are appointed solely to keep the population under control and serve and protect the financial elite.”

“That is what most rural communities in *GNet-Z* say. Look at the Hunt community for example. According to them, the *Bloomcampers* hold the real reins in my hands,” Inês notes.

“And I fear they’re right,” Greta believes. “We’ve had indications for some time that, when push comes to shove, both urban residents and local leaders will be sidelined.”

“Or even more grimly, there are controlled epidemics in certain

more riotous districts. In some cases even I it is the local *Cou-Clib-Clan* with whom the trouble begins," Fernanda continues.
"Aren't you exaggerating?" asks Sérgio. "It sounds like the kind of conspiracy theory the Ignorants readily accept."
"Dad, maybe you should look a little further. The *Cou-Clib-Clans* primarily serve populist leaders. Since their emergence, fewer charter groups have been formed.
"But there's still interest in scientific research, isn't there? You're a good example of that yourself, aren't you?"
"Exactly. But I claim that this interest does not come from the Local Government, but from *Bloomcamp* themselves. And that's why the unrest has to be stopped here and there. And that would explain why sometimes even an administrative district is hit."
"With epidemics? Child, that would mean we're dealing with some kind of eugenics." Sérgio shakes his head in confusion.
Inês sees it and says: "We talked earlier about the meaning of the right to non-participation."
"If I understand correctly," Greta says now, "the *Cou-Clib-Clans* actions are mainly aimed at Knowers who do not belong to the administrative circles. Fernanda speaks about information that the *GNet-Z* would have. Controlled epidemics may occur whenever there is a risk of uprising fuelled by the governing authority itself."
"So a central government could be responsible for certain biological epidemics. These generally don't affect administrative entities unless there's reason to believe a particular local authority poses a threat. The announced support for the right to opt out is a barometer. If not enough ignorant people accept this right, there can be danger. It sounds like the scenario from a cheap science fiction film," Sérgio replies.
Greta looks at her son for a moment. Then she says: "The educational offerings have reached an absolute low point. There's no faculty left that focuses on education. Establishing a direct democracy is taking more and more time and is becoming

increasingly difficult. The number of places where the right to non-participation is enshrined in local law as a democratic right is increasing rapidly. In such places, establishing a process for direct democracy within a learning group or a small community is even more difficult."

Inês nods. "You certainly read the last *Ignarysis*-issue! Whether children learn to read and write is increasingly left to the discretion of parents. Nowadays, that is also a personal right of adults. Children are once again fully *in fans*. Because this parental right has of course far-reaching consequences for those who couldn't choose as children. The choice has an economic side. Districts like ours with free or nearly free learning communities are rare. The only official offering for teaching children reading, arithmetic, and writing is completely privatised and robotised. Each level package has to be rented separately and by the month. That's expensive. Many parents are unwilling or unable to afford such an offering."

Greta then says: "In most districts, people can only provide basic food and necessities, and little general knowledge or science is needed for that. The population is socio-economically forced to sideline itself. Then, of course, the right to non-participation sounds good. Feel good! Exercise your right to be poor and ignorant. After a while, it even seems nice to be an apartment cat, as my mother and her sister Joana put it when they socially interpreted the ignarometric framework."

In the following months, Fernanda retreated completely into the mathematical world. She studied the recent suggestions related to the Mestre hypothesis. With colleagues from her think tank, she took a different approach to the entire argument. The physics interpretation would benefit from this. This, in turn, would bring computer engineers closer to a workable model for something like *WARP*-dislocation. Fernanda is less concerned with this kind of momentum, which she still finds somewhat far-fetched. However, she is excited because the current mathematical model describing

the interaction with anyons is now more consistent. The hypothesis presented is an advance for quantum computing. She heads back to the Bradin district for a short period. During her visit, she learns about the local direct democracy processes. She is somewhat disappointed. Unlike at home, decision-making here is limited solely to science.

Apparently the *Zafonis*-group in Megalissipo is a close-knit structure for the various small communities of the *GNet-Z*. The cooperative meetings that are supposed to lead to decision-making have a fairly efficient design. There's a back-and-forth process where all binding proposals can always be sufficiently reviewed by everyone. One can truly speak of broad consultation before every decision. The limits of consensus are being worked on. To what extent can a decision be blocked when the opposition to it is very small, and to what extent can a decision be made when an overwhelming majority supports it? There are no general rules. Much depends on the impact of the decision on those who disagree and the impact of not deciding on those who do agree with the proposal. There is only a general guideline to seek agreements that give everyone the opportunity to enjoy life and work, both individually and collectively, without preventing others from enjoying their own lives and work. This in itself isn't always easy when money and power are involved. These are what institutional anthropologists call external institutions that must be taken into account.

As far as Fernanda can tell, the Bradin community limits discussions about decisions that impact the various ongoing scientific projects. This in itself creates tensions. External institutional funding plays a role and can hinder internal institutions.

Fernanda and her parents often discuss internal and external institutions among themselves. They also frequently discuss them during meetings with other avatars, including those from Megapple, Megaludein, and Communities of the Middle Kingdom. Together, they analyse participation routines to break through self-isolation.

Preparatory work with those who come from districts where the percentage of Ignorants is very high is a very delicate task. Those who come from a *Zafonis*-learning group can easily come across as pedantic. Sometimes very simple agreements for certain rules go wrong as a result of the *Newspeak* that populist leaders introduced. Promoting, strengthening, and allowing everyone in a community to independently develop cosmopolitan and pluralistic values is a major challenge. This means that all rules are constantly subject to revision, as long as the basic condition remains that everyone has access to all necessary information. This is one of the most difficult aspects of learning to understand how rules work. *Ignarysis* is still a good platform to gain clarity on how to approach certain topics.
This slow and deliberate approach to discussing every decision within the community is no match for the Central Authorities, which encourage large groups of Ignorants to sign a non-participation declaration. There are already places where signing this declaration involves a small fee. The person's file is then amended so that they no longer have access to certain activities or professions. Moreover, the use of certain "welfare" drugs is now completely legal. Sérgio and Inês watch with dismay as their sons become bureaucrats who keep the apartment cats under control through manipulation and this new program.

The local government is increasingly showing its disapproval of the Paulo Demeester Library House. Sérgio and Inês are facing harsh criticism for their practices and the way they manage the learning communities. This is another reason why their sons are becoming estranged from them. They are now openly hostile to their parents.
Fernanda's twin sister Joana says the whole thing doesn't interest her as long as she has enough freedom of movement.
Fernanda herself continues to support her parents in their fight against ignorance and arrogance. She deeply regrets her sister's distant behaviour. She calls on her grandmother for help. She wants

Joana to understand that her freedom of movement and the ability to use the RESULT network are the result of the researcher status enjoyed by both their parents and her sister. That, in itself, is a privilege. Joana then says that their brothers can make their parents *persona non grata* with the snap of their fingers. She would never do anything against them; she just wants to be left alone.

Shortly afterward, Joana moves to Megapple to live with a friend whose avatar she met. In her first conversation with her sister after that move, she mentions the gala she was present at after this year's Field Medal Ceremony. Many in attendance, of course knew that Joana is Fernanda's twin sister. They told her about persistent rumours circulating within the committee that Fernanda might be among the laureates in four years.

Although she likes that rumour, Fernanda tells her sister that mathematics completely captivates her no matter what. She doesn't need prizes, just the opportunity to keep working. Still, it would be nice to hug each other in Megapple in four years.

Why not?

Afterword to Part 10

Until this day, we don't know much details about the work of Sérgio and Inês. We have two short essays we suspect were written by them. Perhaps Fernanda brought them to the *Paradise of Books*. Lev Auctor was almost thirty when his grandmother died, but he says he never heard her speak of it. The two essays could also be copies, rewritten by students of Sérgio and Inês, after having memorised the originals to bring them to *Paradise*.

What Fernanda did tell her grandson Lev was how the most critical elements of *GNet-Z* gradually divided into two groups. One consisted mainly of members of rural communities, led by the Hunt family. This group disappeared at the end of the century without leaving a clear trace. The other *GNet-Z* members then assumed the group could somehow make use of the hypothetical *WARP*-dislocation or a workable alternative. That alternative was supposedly developed by those mysterious Ganymedes, whose existence everyone suspects but whose presence had been unseen until today. Fernanda did lose some of her most important conversation partners at that time. Those who accepted the Ganymedes' existence as established were convinced that their mathematicians were far more advanced in modelling nature, partly because the evolution of mathematical objects and their description occurred in a completely different way for them than here on Earth.

The *Elysium*-project was finally started towards the end of the period we describe here among the *Bloomcampers*. The chronic lack of new drugs for the successive waves of virulent viruses that suddenly struck almost everywhere again was no stranger to this.

While ample funding was made available to sustain research into protective drugs and vaccines, researchers often lacked sufficient time. Furthermore, Bloomberg's top executives, ranked 10th and

11th, sought every possible means to extend their personal lives. But all the biophysical technology and equipment was no match for an aggressive virus that could shut down the lungs, heart, or pancreas in an instant.

In 2090, Fernanda and some of her colleagues were still not fully aware their research was being funded for the sole purpose of making the space city possible to house all *Bloomcamp*-condominiums under one ‘roof’.

End of book 10

A strange letter

Dear Pascal

We are taking advantage of small glitches in the space-time continuum to allow you to become a saga of educators, pedagogues, and anthropogogues. The saga was first published in 122.15 (Holocene calendar), which corresponds to the year 2215 according to the calendar you use in the 21st century.

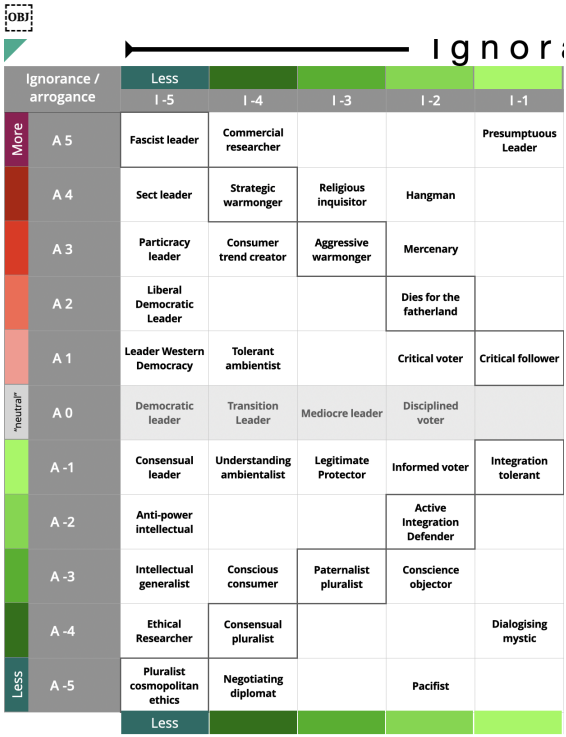
The dynasty spans 20 generations, from 1630 to 2222 in your era.
When we studied your century in preparation for the work, we found your name and your interest in dialogical learning. That is why we kindly ask you to further disseminate the documents we send whenever we get the chance.

You can rest assured. The glitch in the continuum will have no impact on the past or future of living people. Only documents can be sent through it.

On behalf of the team of writers,

Maria Liber

Annex: framework 95/121



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“neutral”					More	
I 0	I 1	I 2	I 3	I 4	I 5	
Populist leader	Career Maker	conspiracy theorist	Right arm populist leader	Right arm fascist leader	Anarchist alpha bomber	More
Volatile Populist Leader	Conspirator	Culture attacker	Dogmatic religious believer	Dogmatic warmonger	Anarchist alpha populist	
	Follower Populist Leader	Militant Supporter	Xenophobe nationalist	Opportunistic seller	book-burner	
Mediocre nationalist	Xenophobe	Nationalist	Xenophobe and homophobic	Omniphobic and racist	Intolerant anarchist	
	Integration intolerant	Fixed party voter		Fundamentalist ambientalist	Ignorant “fake news” maker	
Insipid person		Passive voter	Mediocre follower	Whimsical follower	Harmless Anarchist	“neutral”
	Doubting follower	“contrary” voter	Spiritist	Intolerant ambientalist	Anarchist omega	
		No man plebiscites			Anti-power ignorant	
Mediocre mediator		Yes man plebiscites	Follower Conspiracy Theory	Compulsive Consumer	Ignorant “fake news” reader	
Naive follower	Dialogising religious believer	Respectful militant		Servile follower	Sect ignorant	
Consensual diplomat	Integrated person	Resigned integrated person		Walks with anyone	Silly universal dupe	Less
“neutraal”					More	

Arroqance →